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THE NEW WORLD

AND

THE NEW THOUGHT

BY

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Author of

"The Ethics of Evolution," "Religion and Science as Allies"
"The Open Secret"

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The New World and The New Thought

CHAPTER I.

THE EXPANSION OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE ENLARGEMENT OF FAITH.

As the traveler visits the old shrines and cathedrals of Europe, or the scholar delves among the mediæval treatises on astronomy or geography, he is continually meeting with conceptions of the world and its creation of a most curious and childlike simplicity. A frequently recurring group in the sculptures, mosaics, stained-glass or missal paintings of the Middle Ages is that which represents the Almighty in human form, moulding the sun, moon, or stars, and with His own hands hanging them from the solid firmament which supports the upper heaven and its celestial waters and which overarches the great plain of earth; and when the work of the six days is finished He is represented as sitting, bent and fatigued, in the well-known attitude of the "Weary Mercury" of classical sculpture. As late as the seventeenth century, Milton, in his poetic representation of the popular theology of his day, does not hesitate at the most literal description

of how the second person in the Trinity, when the hour for making the universe came

> "Took the golden compasses, prepared
> In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
> This universe and all created things.
> One foot He centred, and the other turned
> Round through the vast profundity obscure,
> And said, 'Thus far extend; thus far thy bounds:
> This be thy just circumference, O world.'"

The two statements in the Genesis myths, that the world was made in six days and also that "God spake and it was done," were both of them accepted in the most literal way by the great ecclesiastical and scientific authorities of Christendom down to the sixteenth century. The contradiction of an instantaneous creation which lasted through six days was usually reconciled by some explanation, like that of St. Thomas Aquinas, which was adopted even by Luther and the earlier Protestant Reformers, viz.: that God created the substance of the world in a single moment but employed the six days in separating, shaping and further adorning it. As to the date of this great event, it was the general verdict of both Catholic and Protestant authorities down to a century or two ago that it could hardly be more than 6,000 years ago.

As to the shape and dimensions of the world, the prevalent ideas during the Middle Ages were marked by a precision and pettiness equally crude. Following unreflectingly the lead of whatever imagery the Scripture presented, they insisted that the earth was at creation vaulted over with a solid dome or ceiling, the firmament of Genesis, above which was the celes-

tial cistern, containing the waters which are above the firmament. It is through apertures in this vault, "the windows of heaven," that the rains are allowed to fall on the earth by God and His angels; and above it, in the third heaven, or seventh as others said, is the customary abode of the Almighty and His court. In the curious description of the universe, based upon Scripture, written in the sixth century by Cosmas Indicopleustes, which for a long while was regarded as most authoritative, the ideas of the early Christian theologians were summed up in a complete system. As in the ninth chapter of Hebrews the world is likened to the tabernacle in the desert, it must be oblong in shape. Like the table of shew-bread, the earth is flat, and twice as long as broad, 400 days' journey one way and 200 the other. It is surrounded by four seas, at the outer edges of which rise massive walls, the pillars of heaven of which Job speaks, on which the vault of heaven rests. The disappearance of the sun at night is caused by its passing behind a great mountain at the north of the earth.

Although by the scholars of subsequent centuries this naïve representation of the world was much refined and modified, yet the general conception of the universe as a sort of huge house, with heaven as its upper story and the earth as its lower story, prevailed among the people and a large part of the world of scholars, close down to the modern period.

When the sky-parlor of the heavenly host was so little a way off, legends of saints and prophets caught up to heaven or of angels flying down to earth, of heavenly voices speaking from the upper story to

chosen men on the lower, or of frequent special interventions by heavenly powers to rescue the holy or punish the wicked, would most naturally arise. Even when men's conceptions began to enlarge, they still remained comparatively diminutive. Certain Egyptian astronomers, says Flammarion, calculated that the sun was 369 miles distant and Saturn 492. An Italian system, that the same astronomer mentions, was on a somewhat more generous scale. The crystalline sphere in which the moon was set was 107,000 miles distant, Mercury 209,000 and the sun 3,892,000. As late as the sixteenth century, Zwingli and the early Protestant Reformers held to the view of the church fathers that a solid floor or dome separated the heavens from the earth, that above it were the waters and the abode of the angels, and below it the earth and man. And in the cellar of this world-house, not far below the earth's crust, popular superstition, corroborated by the authority of great poets like Virgil, Dante, and Milton, located the caverns of the underworld, from which imp and devil and perturbed spirit came up at times to walk the earth.

To-day, how has science stretched out this baby-house universe of our ancestors! The astronomer has turned his telescope on that adamantine firmament and it has dissolved into thin air. The glittering points that gemmed its surface have expanded into enormous suns, thousands of times as large as our own globe. The petty heaven of the Book of Revelation 12,000 furlongs or 1,379 English miles each way has spread out, from that one-twentieth part or less of the cubic dimensions which we now know our own

earth to have, into an immensity of space which it is difficult to realize. Let us try by a few facts to give some conception of its grandeur.

Milton, in "Paradise Lost," in accordance with the older ideas of the size of the universe, thought that nine days was an adequate length of time for the rebel archangel, who was thrown out of heaven, to fall down from the top of the universe and the courts of God to the depths of hell. But we now know that if a steamship, moving at the average rate, had started in Columbus' lifetime for the sun, it would not have reached its goal to-day. If a baby were put in an express train, moving at highest locomotive speed, to go to our solar luminary, the baby would die of old age before it could arrive there. If that locomotive went onward towards our nearest fixed star, stopping neither day nor night, it would take it 700,000 centuries to get there.

The speed of a locomotive is evidently too slow a standard to use as a measure among these immense spaces. Let us take, then, for our imaginary courier, the fastest traveler we know of, the wave of sunlight, speeding 186,000 miles a second. How long would it take even a beam of sunlight to reach the nearest sun beyond our own? Not less than three and one quarter years; for it is no less than 20,000,000,000 miles away. If we should want to go to Sirius and could get the same lightning courier, the waves of the starlight, to take us, it would require twenty-two years. To get to the pole star it would take fifty years; to pass from one end to the other of the Milky Way, that great star-cluster nearest to us, it would

take a ray of light 15,000 years. To reach a star of the fourteenth magnitude would require 100,000 years.

By the naked eye we can see some 6,000 stars, each a sun, all at such immense intervals from one another. But the telescope discerns 45,000,000 stars and nebulæ; the photographic eye, more subtle still, might take the record, it is calculated, of 160,000,000 stars. There are over 1,000 nebulæ which the telescope resolves into swarms of stars. These are supposed to be great groups, similar to our Milky Way, dimmed and drawn together, apparently by the immense distance at which they are situated. In that case, how far off are they? Over 300 times as far as the farthest suns in our Milky Way; and it would take the nimble messenger of light 4,000,000 years to get there. How huge must these suns be that can send the undulations of their light across such enormous space! Into what amazing pettiness has astronomy shriveled our proud centre of the universe, and, dislodging it from its former prominent position, sent it whirling on its way as one of the smaller satellites in the train of a central body, the sun, which, though as much larger than the earth as a cart-wheel is larger than a pea, is yet but one of more than 20,000,000 suns contained in its own part of space, and is itself not stationary, but revolving through space, with its fleet of planets, at the rate of 4,000 miles a day, around perhaps some still larger sun.

Verily, these infinities of space set the brain reeling, in the vain effort to realize them. Let us turn, then, to the changes in our estimates of the earth's duration

and our ideas of time. Here, again, how enormously has science multiplied the numbers! How utterly inadequate are those dates for man's first appearance on the globe and the beginning of the earth that were generally accepted one hundred years ago and are still printed in the margin of the Bibles issued by our Bible societies! It was in the year 4004 B. C., according to the great chronological authority and theologian, Archbishop Usher, that the creation of the world took place, a date settled by the authority of the Holy Bible; and Dr. Lightfoot, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, in the seventeenth century, with still finer precision, fixed the day and hour at the 23d of October at nine o'clock in the morning. Luther declared, on the authority of Moses, that longer ago than 6,000 years the world did not exist. Pope Urban VII was anxious to allow a little more time to have elapsed since the creation of man; but his extreme limit was 5199 B. C.

To-day these sixty centuries are but a handbreadth of the time that science demands. Sixty millenniums would hardly suffice. Science has mined in caverns and found man's tools and weapons among the bones of mammoths. It has deciphered hieroglyphics and found arts and history already venerable before the date when commentators admitted that Adam had begun to breathe. As far back as 6,000 and 7,000 years before Christ, among the cities and temples of Babylonia and Egypt, man was living a civilized or semi-civilized life. For the quarternary age, in the early part of which unmistakable relics of man are found, geology demands a period of at least 10,000 years.

For the tertiary and secondary epochs, and the immensely thick deposits belonging to them, not less than 3,000,000 years will suffice. For the primary and primeval or azoic ages, not less than 17,000,000 years more are needed. Recall what vast beds of chalk and limestone, miles in thickness, have been built up by the microscopic creatures who have lived and died in the primitive oceans; how from a fiery cloud the globe concentrated to a molten ball, and on the molten ball formed the crust that now suspends us above the still furnace-heated interior. How long a time should we estimate for these æonic changes? From the experiments of the physicist, Bischoff, with molten basalt and its rate of cooling to a solid state, the scientists infer that for the earth to cool from the 2,000 degrees centigrade of the former molten state down to 200 centigrade, would require at least 350,000,000 years. Then for the condensation of our solar nebula, (originally extending beyond the orbit of Neptune, *i. e.*, 5,000,000,000 miles in diameter), into the sun and planets, and the further cooling down from the heated solid state to the temperature where life could begin, additional millions of years would be required; and when we recall how many thousand times larger than our sun are many of the solar globes, is not the chronology of the heavens carried back into an antiquity, in comparison with whose veritable eternity the age of those hills that of old were dubbed "everlasting" seems but as a single breath of a summer's insect.

Such is the amazing immensity of the universe that modern science has disclosed, an illimitable extension

and duration before which the wing of imagination grows weary, in the effort to realize even vaguely how vast is its sweep. It is evident that this changed scale of the physical universe must suggest to the reason of man an analogous change in our view of the origin, nature and destiny of man and the methods of God's government.

Can we still hold man to be the aim and end of creation? Can we still think, many to-day are asking, that the earth and heavens were fitted up specially for his abode? that the animal world was made just for his food, and the trees to shade his head from the heat? the sun to warm him by day and the moon and stars to supply light to his path by night?

Is man not shown, by this immense magnitude of the universe, to be but a most ephemeral and infinitesimal insect, the spawn of the primeval slime, a creature altogether too insignificant to be supposed to have been specially created or specially cared for? What else but fables of man's credulous childhood are those faiths that held man to be a child of God, made in the divine image, or that he has been the recipient of divine revelations, and that the Son of God left His place by God's right hand, and choosing out of all the million solar and planetary systems in space this most insignificant speck, called earth, was here incarnated in a human form, to supply salvation by His blood to those who should enter the church He should found? Science, with its searching instruments, has investigated earth and heaven. No telescope has caught sight in the remotest recesses of any Titan king seated on a celestial throne; no mi-

croscope has observed any soul within the tissues of the brain; no mining shaft has found a limbo of departed spirits beneath the earth's crust. The fires are there, but no trace of any imps or devils or ghostly shades. Dust to dust is the law of life. We begin as a chemical composition; we end, when the machinery runs down, as a chemical decomposition. When thousands of worlds are burning out into lifeless cinders, by inevitable laws of the dissipation of energy and the cooling down of every warmer sphere to the average temperature or, we should better say, refrigeration, of the interstellar space, some 200 degrees, as it is, below zero, why should we fancy this petty biped of a man should escape the general death?

Such are the questions and dilemmas, sometimes put in very scoffing tones, that in the minds of a large and growing class among us are daily arising, and daily alienating them more and more from the older views of man's origin, nature and destiny.

On the other hand, the champions of the older faith maintain that in spite of this immense expansion of the universe we may still look on man as the chief subject of divine care and our earth as the moral and spiritual centre of the universe. The rank and practical importance of God's creatures, or the orbs He has made, do not depend, they urge, on their physical bigness or littleness, but on higher qualities. Though the telescope and the magnitudes it has disclosed dwarf man to a petty insect, the microscope gives back to man his dignity. To the Almighty and Eternal a thousand years are as one day, a day as is a

thousand years, a world like Sirius as a drop of dew, and a drop of dew as a starry constellation. Small as man is, he has within him a knowledge, reason, will, consciousness and creative power that put him in a higher realm than any mass, however huge, of insensate matter. No globe of brute matter has its reason of existence in itself. The reason of being in all material things lies outside them, in their serviceableness to the spiritual universe. That which redeems sun, moon and stars from insignificance is simply that they beautify and illuminate the planet in which man dwells. We may even question whether these huge bubbles of matter have any real, independent existence? Many of the ablest philosophers have held that our very idea of space and time is relative, an extract and product of our conscious experience, and need not imply any outward reality. These solid-seeming globes and all their material phenomena are but transitory shows. They are either subjective illusions or shadow pictures of the divine will, projected on to the screen of space, to serve as a theatre for the training of souls and the chastening of man's ambition; or perhaps as mockeries and humiliations, to punish the presumptuous reason of the skeptical scientists.

A theologian of the early part of this century, when the discoveries of geology first threatened the historical accuracy of Genesis, had the boldness and keenness to explain the fossils in the depths of the earth, that seemed to prove that death entered the world before Adam was created, as having been stirred into the fluent substance of the earth on the

creation-day, just to puzzle and discomfit the vainglorious geologist. "Who can prove," it may similarly be asked, "that all these double stars and nebulæ and apparent magnitudes of the skies that the conceited astronomers use as arguments to undermine the credibility of the first three chapters of Genesis, are not similar divine mockeries and judgments on the too prying curiosity and overconfident reason of modern man?" Who knows but that, when God has given man his appointed probation on this planet, this theatre of earth and this phantasmal scenery of the skies will roll together like a scroll and vanish, leaving only, to survive the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, the indestructible realm of the spiritual world and such souls as have accepted God's plan of salvation?

With such answering questions and assumptions are all inferences from the modern change of front of the universe, that would cast doubt on the validity of the older theologic systems and man's unique importance in the universe, often calmly waved aside.

Which then of these antagonistic groups of inferences, drawn from the notable widening of modern thought, may we the more reasonably accept?

There is a certain measure of truth in each of them. On the one hand, the radical view of modern materialists as to the transitoriness and insignificance of humanity in our magnified universe, and the atheistic inferences supposed to be demanded by the march of modern science, are altogether too extreme.

If the whole universe be nothing but forms of matter and its motions and functions, then it matters not how

immense it is. A million million miles of it are as meaningless and empty as a single cubic yard. If the human soul have a real existence and superior nature, then the intrinsic rank and capacities of the human reason and conscience remain the same, no matter how many thousand times the area of the stage on which it plays its parts be stretched out.

One high intuition of eternal truth, one holy impulse of consecration or noble moral choice, is grander than a whole world of clay, more magnificent than the most colossal galaxy of gas and dust. Intricate as are the mechanics of nature and stupendous as is its bulk, the vision of reason comprehends the most complex system. But mechanical nature, on the other hand, is not aware of its own marvels and quite unconscious of its triumphs. The astronomic world has not expanded faster and cannot expand faster than man's mind dilates to embrace it in his thought and reduce it to order. What we lose in relative importance because of the enlargement of the boundaries of the universe, we recover from the new revelation of man's amazing capacities that is given through these transcendent achievements of human science.

The materialist would have us bow our head in despair because Sun and Sirius and the system of the Pleiades are so gigantic. But when we remember that it is "the mind of man that has measured them as with a surveyor's chain and weighed them as if he held them in his hand," is there not in this sweep and mystery of the human intellect something too provocative of awe and reverence to be repressed by any lumps of earth however mammoth in size? It may

be that when, through the telescope of science, we look up at the sky, our human stature seems to shrivel in the most alarming fashion. Yet, when, under the optician's guidance, we look at the realms below us, to what giant size do the dimensions of the human frame again expand! If the nebulæ of the astronomer belittle man, the bacteria and the atoms of the microscopist equally magnify him. A cubic inch of Bilin slate contains over a billion of millions of infusorial shells, whose characteristics are still distinct enough for scientific identification. Compared with one of these diminutive creatures, man's bulk is as large, proportionately, as a stellar system is, measured against man's stature; and each corpuscle that revolves in a drop of blood within our veins may be a planetary system of spheres to which the human frame may be as colossal a galaxy as the Milky Way appears to our astronomers. When we think of the exquisite structure of these infinitesimal creatures and the admirable adjustment of their organs and functions to the needs of their life, (an adaptation which is as perfect in a bacillus or vibrio as in a whale), may we not believe that the power that provides so generously for the million inhabitants of a drop of water will much more take care for man, no matter how huge the constellations may be, under the charge of His infinite wisdom?

Science has not diminished but multiplied the proofs of the intelligibility and rationality of the universe. It has made plainer than ever the fundamental likeness of the finite spirit that reads the great stone-book and the starry hieroglyphics, with the Infinite

Spirit that has woven with such intelligence and beneficence this marvelous web of matter and force.

If the expansion of the universe and the immutable reign of cause and effect through it all have undermined the old argument from design, based on the adaptation of special organs to special requirements or conditions, it has given, instead of this "design by retail," a "design by wholesale" far more majestic. It has presented us with an all-embracing system of planful reason and self-adjusting development which demands for its inception and maintenance nothing less than the constant life and intelligence of an Omnipresent spirit. Modern science itself still puts man at the head of the kingdom of life; it holds him to be the climax of the ascending evolution, apparently its end and goal. When we look back on the long ages through which the divine hand, by patient process of evolution, was preparing for man's appearance, and slowly moulding him in the womb of nature, till at length the great work received its crown in the emergence of the self-conscious mind, able and willing to join hands and hasten onward, with unprecedented rapidity, the evolutionary processes, lifting them to higher levels of moral and spiritual unfolding than physical nature knows, does not man, then, assume a higher dignity? Does it not seem more probable than ever before that his Creator did not delve and model in the clay-pits of life for so many long ages merely to complete a marvelous automaton, that he would send back to inanimate dust with the stoppage of his pulse and thus render vain all the long travail of the æons?

If it be the great law of science that the fittest survive, that no atom passes into nothing, but only passes on to new forms and fields of activity, what else in all the ascending ranks of life is the best and fittest to survive, if not this truth-seeking mind, this conscience, reverent of the right, this soul-personality which knows itself an inseparable unity, an integer more indivisible than any atom, the centre in which all reasoning, memory, comparison and judgment subsist and by which alone they are possible? Without a continuance in existence of this conscious spirit which is the most consummate flower and essence of the universe, that universe itself becomes a meaningless chaos and ephemeral force.

The materialistic inferences which have sometimes been drawn from the grand enlargement of the world, effected by modern thought, are not, then, either necessary or credible. The expansion of the universe has no endorsement to give to these melancholy theories or that contempt for humanity which they would foster.

While this is true, there are, on the other hand, very important changes demanded by the recognition of our magnified universe. In the new light supplied by modern scientific discoveries it is impossible that our theological conceptions should remain unchanged. These discoveries require us to modify very considerably the views of God's government and the nature, origin and destiny of man, that were held of old in the larger churches. It is true, of course, that to the divine eye our ideas of small and great, of the momentary and the permanent, may be interchangeable. Nevertheless, this does not dismiss the notions of time

and space as mere subjective illusions which we need not regard.

Whatever be the standard of measurement, large or small, there is that relative position and contiguity and varied direction that constitutes space; there is that inescapable fact of a before and an after in conscious experience or successive motions, that constitutes the essence of time. And the comparative magnitudes and durations of these conditions of space and time are not to be ignored in any reasonable interpretation of the laws of the universe and man's relations to the divine government.

Especially should it be remembered that neither these vast spaces nor far prolonged periods that modern science has disclosed are empty things. This is the correlative discovery of science everywhere accompanying every extension of the universe, viz.: that this universe teems with energy and change.

Another thing is equally to be borne in mind—that all these changes are orderly and harmonious. The laws of the transmutation of species, established by Darwin and Wallace, show the unity of life. The revelations of the spectroscope and the majestic laws of the correlation of force that Grove and Joule established, proving that light, heat and magnetism are all variants of one another and manifestations of a common force behind them, all show an essential Unity, running as a scarlet web through the universe. All these systems of suns are under one constitution, and the luminous matter in all is substantially the same. One ether extends through all as the medium of communication. One gravitation guides all in their

orbits. One law of birth and growth and heredity pushes the kingdom of life steadily upward. One process of organization, continuous and alike, rules every galaxy and every atom. From the diffused to the compacted, from the lifeless to the living, from the nebula to the man, from lower to higher—such is the eternal rhythm of the cosmic evolution.

Here in these words, the cosmic evolution, we have named the mightiest change which science has made in the last half-century. From the moment Galileo's opera glasses showed the phases of Venus this law was sure to be reached sooner or later. It was from that day a predestined thing that the current belief of Christendom of 200 years ago, in which our earth was regarded as a scene of decay and moral fall and constant supernatural intervention, should suffer change. It seems almost superfluous to recall how every birth or death, every comet or earthquake, every unusual event, was regarded as occurring by the special intervention of some supernatural agent, magician or saint, imp or angel, devil or god, according to the respective smallness or bigness, badness or goodness, of the event. All this has been ejected by science from the belief of enlightened men and women. Everywhere law is found to reign. Lily and solar system are found to unfold according to one and the same grand system. The hallucinations of the senses, even the insane delusions, are found to have their natural sources.

The world to-day is indeed found fuller than ever of marvels; but now here can anything be credited as occurring in violation of law. No miracle, in the sense of an interruption of the universal order to

benefit some favorite among the sons of men, is longer credited. The only miracles that even religion to-day should know are those wonders, manifold and mysterious enough, that present unusual examples of subtler and deeper laws than we have as yet acquainted ourselves with. The greatest of miracles to every thoughtful mind is that God's forethought and universal plans have been so perfect, from the first day that the morning stars sang together, that no subsequent interference has been needed to rectify any defects. The astonishing freaks of power or supernatural signs of a celestial mission, of which the older theology made so much, have therefore lost credence, and all the witches, imps and devils of the olden time have vanished before this confidence in nature's unchanging orderliness, like the shadows of a hideous night.

When there is no longer any up or down, nor cavernous abode of shades beneath the earth, and when the azure dome of crystal, above which God held His court, has been dissipated into interstellar ether, such wonders as the descent of Christ into hell or His ascent to heaven to sit on God's right hand have had to be turned into allegories, even if they do stand in the Apostles' creed. As man has been found to be not the victim of a fall, the ruin of a once perfect being, but an ascending spirit, "slowly climbing with the climbing world" out of early animality to his destined inheritance as a child of God, so the old doctrines of total depravity and the need of a vicarious atoner to pay for the sin of man's federal head, Adam, have passed away. The perfect man in our modern

thought is not behind us but before us. The theologic scheme, by which God the Father sacrificed His only-begotten Son to snatch mankind out of the clutches of Satan on one of the myriad specks that dot the celestial ocean of space, appears, in the light of the modern expansion of the universe, as the most obvious relic of the infancy of thought. It is a conception of the world, long ago outgrown.

Humanity has had not merely one Saviour, but a thousand, each doing his part, great or small, in regenerating mankind. God did more than incarnate Himself in Jesus. He has incarnated Himself in all humanity in proportion to the spiritual receptivity of each; and every true and disinterested soul, every martyr for truth and justice who has surrendered his life to uplift the world or ease a brother's woe, has had his glorious participation in that red blood of sacrifice that slowly redeems our race from its ancient sins and inveterate diseases.

The beginning of the soul on earth and its exit and future career must take place by general law. The origin of the soul will henceforth be conceived less as a special creation than as a creative specialization of the universal life, an individualization of the indwelling divine Spirit in a personal form and consciousness. The immortality of the soul, if it is to be credited in the twentieth century, must no longer be represented as a miraculous gift to a few elect individuals, a supernatural regathering and reanimation of bodily substances and atoms, long since scattered but flying together at the sound of a trumpet. On the contrary, it must be regarded as a universal and regular process,

the natural release, at the time of the body's decay, of a soul too vital, too unitary and too subtle to be involved in the dissolution of its clayey tabernacle. Immortality must be found to be a process in strict harmony with a rational universe, the only rational outcome of the universe as it unfolds to its higher consummation. If man's soul is immortal, its salvation must be under universal laws, not a thing due to the accident of birth in a Christian nation or the visit of some missionary with a Bible or the presence of a priest with drops of holy water. The doors of possible immortality must be as wide open in China or Japan as in New York or London,—nay, as wide open in Mars or any of the satellites of Sirius, if conscious life has yet evolved on any of these bodies, as it was in the streets of Jerusalem in the first century of our era. When we think of the millions of globes, where the same laws of evolution are going on and have gone on for æons as here, can we credit it that it is to our own little planet that the saving mercy of God has been confined? Not alone to our earth and in the flesh of its humanity has the love of God been manifested and incarnated, but also, I like to think, to every part of the cosmos where souls have come to need it, in every abode of planetary and stellar society. As evil is no longer to be thought due to the malign influence of an apple-bite, or the weakness of a woman, but as an incident of that government by fixed law and that option of free-will that everywhere prevails in the universe, so every embodied life of the soul is a training in spiritual strength and upbuilding to the fuller character of a mature moral nature.

"The divine judgment is not a cleaving asunder of the blue dome for the descent of angelic squadrons, headed by the majestic Son of God, the angry breath of His mouth consuming the wicked," as theologians have pictured it; it is no spectacular drama of retribution, winding up the scroll of the ages with sudden afterclap of retribution; but it is the constant self-working of an inherent law, assimilating us more and more to that infernal or celestial love to which we have given our hearts.

All the punishments of the soul are means of discipline and growth; all its heavenly promotions are rewards of spiritual desert and fitness. Death is but an incident and a necessary incident of the onward progress of the spirit. So, also, the conception of the departed soul as being conducted and shut up in certain localities, above or below, in heavenly courts or infernal pits, seems a relic of this older geocentric view of the universe, which no mind familiar with the heliocentric structure of the heavens can very well hold. Modern thought conceives of the disembodied soul, rather, as possessed of the freedom of the universe, and carrying its own heaven and hell within its happy or remorseful consciousness.

In the soul's life after death, as before death, its natural course is a continued ascent. We enter the spirit world, the wisest of us, as mere infants in spiritual power, to go onward, by varied experiences, perhaps through many rebirths, to the youth and full maturity of spiritual character. The infinity of worlds and the measureless eternities of time and varied conditions of existence, that modern knowledge exhibits,

seem to me to harmonize little with the popular notion that this earthly life is the only probation time of the human soul. The enormity and disproportion of the penalty for him who fails to meet the requirements of the current scheme of salvation seem too great to be credible. The wisest of men are but little children, the longest earthly life a mere tick of the pendulum of eternity. The æons of that eternity belong to a Father who rejoiceth more over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety-and-nine that have never gone astray; and I fondly dream that He will try, through failure after failure and effort after effort, to crown with success every case of soul-training He has ever begun; and His almighty power and unceasing love will not in the end be defeated by the creature He has made. Each soul that begins to live enters on a pilgrimage whose length can be measured by no clock but that of eternity. Divine spark, as the human spirit is, proceeding from the bosom of the Divine, there is none so degraded that, in the course of time, in the endless opportunities of the future, he cannot rise to the level of his heavenly destiny. "I do not care," as a friend of mine has said, "if it takes several solar systems to do it. The soul can wear out solar systems as we wear out coats."

The whole universe is God's home, and the vastest constellations but a corner or two in the many mansions of the hospitable and everlasting sanctuary. Everywhere, through its unending aisles, the Divine Life pulses and the unswerving Love cares for all His children. Steadily upward and onward they are conducted, by salutary experiences, from room to

room, from realm to realm; and these huge spaces and dots of flame and molten or out-burned balls of fire that, to the materialist, seem such a dreary and meaningless tomb, are, to the eye of faith, a grand and systematic university of souls, class above class and hall enclosing hall—all its courts bright with growing revelations, fragrant with unwearying love and tremulous with the breath and sympathy of the omnipresent, indwelling God.

It has been charged that the reconstructions which modern inquiry have made diminish reverence, foster skepticism and are inimical to religion. But for faith to be panic-struck because this earth of ours has shriveled to the minuteness of a mustard seed is a most unreasonable alarm. So much more glorious this cosmic Igdrasil, on whose stem of life this mustard seed is borne aloft! So much more adorable the Divine Fulness that spread out these teeming fields, whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere!

Yes, immensely more glorious; unless, forsooth, you fancy these titan dimensions and myriad processes too great a task for any mind or personality, even that of the Infinite, to direct or order. "How, then," as Martineau asks, "has your mind, as learner, managed to measure and know it, at least enough to think it to be something beyond thought?"

And if it is too great a task for conscious mind—the highest faculty we know,—too great even for a mind of divine compass to order and superintend it, then how much more is it beyond the possibilities of anything else to account for that wonderful harmony which the cosmos so plainly exhibits!

The fact is that these reconstructions of modern science do not touch the substance of religion. They only shift its forms and really enlarge its sway and dignity. Put the case we have been discussing squarely before any intelligent Christian, so that he can see its full significance, and who would prefer to go back to the cosmic baby-house of Cosmas Indicopleustes and Thomas Aquinas? Who would vault in again the immensity of space to restore Dante's little heaven? Who would cut down to six ordinary evenings and mornings the activity of Him who inhabiteth eternity and has been forever at His work of evolution? Who would relinquish the confidence and hope inspired by the unswerving progress of that single divine purpose that links the ages together?

For, whatever science has wrenched from the hand of faith, she has given her back triple and quadruple gifts. The vigorous probing that science has brought to nature has not removed any of its wonderfulness, any of its perfections, has not in any way robbed man of his highest hopes or lessened his dignity; but it has disclosed new marvels behind those that first struck man's attention; it has made the universe more august and yet more homelike. It has not emptied the world of spiritual force, but filled it with the presence of one All-inclusive Wisdom, one Infinite Power and Eternal Love, from the firm yet tender embrace of whose perfect order we can never fall.

"That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

CHAPTER II.

THE SANCTION FOR MORALITY IN NATURE.

The old proverb calls it "an ill wind that blows nobody good." Conversely, there are few good winds that do not, at first, or in certain ways, blow ill to somebody. Every fertilizing shower interrupts some one's promenade, or spoils somebody's hat. Every new and better road pulls down somebody's fence. So the reconstruction of thought and faith which the progress of modern knowledge has made, beneficent as it has been, has caused great perplexity to many minds, and set not a few quite adrift on a shoreless sea of doubt. In the turmoil of opinions not only hollow traditions and baseless credulities have been assailed, but also the most legitimate authorities. Those naturally skeptical or iconoclastic, use the new discoveries as clubs to batter down the best established principles of morality and religion. A conspicuous recent sufferer from this tendency is the great law of Evolution, which the labors of Darwin and Spencer, Wallace and Romanes have so strongly confirmed.

The four great facts on which the law of evolution rests are very simple. Living creatures, in the first place, multiply so fast that there would be neither food nor room for more than a small part, were all to survive. Secondly, every living thing born into the world varies slightly from every other. Thirdly, all

living beings inherit, more or less, the peculiarities of their parents. In the fourth place, the selection of those that survive is determined by their fitness to meet the struggle for existence, or to please their mates. These four facts appear, to scientific minds, no less evident and elementary than innocent in their bearings and august in their monitions.

But when the popular mind, hearing that these are now accepted truths of modern knowledge, begins to handle and apply them to daily life, what are its practical deductions? To our surprise we find it inferred that evolution is a process where merciless competition and cruelty are the honored rule, that nature is a field where every creature struggles, and must struggle, for himself alone; that, therefore, such struggle is properly the rule to-day; that might is the only right which nature knows, and that the weak go to the wall, where they had better go.

It is not the ignorant only who adopt these conclusions, but also learned savants who have been prominent advocates of the evolution theory. One of its American champions, Mr. Van Buren Denslow, some years ago, rebuking Mr. Spencer for not carrying out to its logical result the teachings of the doctrine of development, maintained that moral rules are merely "doctrines established by the strong for the government of the weak. The prompting to steal and lie is as much a prompting of nature with the weak, as the commandments prohibiting those acts are naturally urged on the weak by the stronger ones, who wish to keep the weak in subjection."

Similarly, the German philosopher, Nietzsche, in his

"Zur Genealogie der Moral," traces the genesis of present morality in the following manner: At the beginning of civilization, "a herd of blond beasts of prey, free from every social restraint, ranged about, exulting in murder, rapine, torture, and incendiarism, and made slaves of the lower races." Their own qualities, cruelty, pride, joy in danger, and extreme unscrupulousness (to-day reckoned bad qualities)—were then the good qualities. Their slaves and subjects naturally abhorred these qualities of their oppressors, and gave the place of honor to those qualities that ameliorated their own sufferings,—pity, self-sacrifice, patience, diligence, and friendliness. When, at length, this slave-morality, through the victory of Christianity and democracy, got the upper hand, the primitive morality was inverted; the naturally bad qualities were regarded as good, and the native instincts of man that incite to selfishness and cruelty were condemned as evil. Although Nietzsche's theory of the origin of the virtues is quite opposite to that of Mr. Denslow, he agrees with him in considering morals not as universal laws, but as the edicts and utilities of a class.

Equally surprising, were the declarations of Professor Huxley in his last volume of collected essays, "Evolution and Ethics," in which his singular Romanes Lecture was still further championed and given a permanent place among his works. After painting in the blackest of colors the injustice of the world, and roundly scoring the unmoral character of the cosmic order, he appeals to the logic of facts as proving that "the cosmos works

through the lower nature of man, not for righteousness, but against it." With especial severity he criticises the fallacies, as he would brand them, of evolution. As the unmoral sentiments have been evolved, no less than the moral, "there is, so far, as much natural sanction for the one as for the other." "The thief and the murderer," he bluntly says, "follow nature as much as the philanthropist." Cosmic evolution is "incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before." Professor Huxley contends that "for man's successful progress as far as the savage state, he has been largely indebted to those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger." But with the changed conditions of man's later life, these serviceable qualities of the earlier time have become defects. "Civilized man would gladly kick down the ladder by which he has climbed. In fact, civilized man brands all these ape and tiger promptings with the name of sins. He punishes many of the acts which flow from them as crimes, and in extreme cases he does his best to put an end to the survival of the fittest of former days by axe and rope." "The cosmic progress has no sort of relation to moral ends." "The imitation of it by man is inconsistent with the first principles of ethics."

The ethical progress of society to-day, Professor Huxley concludes, "depends not on imitating the cosmic progress, still less in running away from it, but in combating it." The microcosm should pit itself against the macrocosm, and "social progress means a checking of the cosmic progress at every step

and the substitution for it of another which may be called the ethical progress."

Such, in substance, is the string of pyrotechnical paradoxes through which the eminent English Evolutionist gave the scientific and philosophic world as lively a shock as it has for a long time experienced.

Have nature and evolution, then, no sanction for morality? What are we to think of these modern Jeremiads of certain evolutionists, which seem to come, now from the lips of a resurrected Schopenhauer, now from those of a third century Manichæan, and which have made all the old-time dualists and supernaturalists ask with wondering glee, "Is Saul, also, among the prophets?"

The question has very important bearings. For, if morals and nature be in antagonism; if evolution be a process whose law is selfishness and cruelty, or at least without sanction for righteousness and helpfulness, then, both the cause of evolution and that of rational ethics are weighted with grave objections; and advanced science joins its voice with ancient dogmatism in declaring the world a realm divided against itself.

If, on the other hand, we can find our ethical instincts rooted in the whole realm of vital nature, and developed step by step with the ascent of life, then science and faith will be harmonized, and we shall see that the fundamental verities and duties are right, not simply because revelation or intuition has taught them, but that they have been taught because the experience of the world has shown them to be right,

and the irresistible instincts of our vital being proclaim them afresh in every succeeding generation.

Professor Huxley and the other critics who would stigmatize evolution as a cruel and selfish process, and who like to describe the world as a vast battle-field, where the carnage goes on without cessation, and the weak are systematically left at the mercy of the strong, make the error of bisecting nature. They drop out of view the better and larger half of it, the end and consummation of the process, and then condemn the whole because of their own partial observation. They are like a man who should cut an apple-tree in two at the trunk, and then blame the roots because they bore no fruit. The process of evolution should be judged, not by its roots, by what appears in its lower, rudimentary forms and crude beginnings, but by its whole sweep and final outcome. It is the mature form, most of all, that presents the characteristic genius of plant and animal. The real nature of an oak-tree is not best discerned in the folded cotyledons, or the initial swellings of the acorn, or the rootlets that first push out from the shell. Acorn and rootlets are but parts and expressions of that evolutive potentiality, that generic idea, which is only to be completely understood when we gaze at the full-grown monarch of the forest.

So, to discern the real character of the cosmic evolution and the authentic teachings of nature, we should not separate the inorganic realm from the organic, nor the animal from the human plane of development, nor hold up the brutal warfare of the carnivora and the ravin and ruin of the competing

rivals of the Saurian ages as exemplifications of nature's character and lessons. We must recognize the animal and the human species as parts of one divine system, the end and fruit of which are even more significant than its crude beginnings. In the highest moral and spiritual forms and forces attained in the process of evolution, we should recognize the ampler and clearer manifestations of that vital spirit and divine power which works and unfolds itself through all the varied levels of creation. If civilization and science and human morality really constitute an "artificial world," as Professor Huxley asks us to believe, "antagonistic to the general constitution of the universe," how can we look for anything but defeat when the microcosm pits itself against the macrocosm? How, indeed, could the higher life of humanity ever have won a victory or reached the elevation that it has attained?

The contrary position is evident. Precisely because human science and morality have been in harmony and alliance with the secret laws and higher forces of the universe, they have made the progress that we know.

The term nature, properly used, means the whole of creation, not its lower half; and the great victory of modern science has been precisely to show that man is as much a part of nature and under nature's laws as the vegetable or the animal kingdom. If humanity and human life are not a part of nature, then the laborious researches and boasted achievements of Darwin, Spencer, and Romanes have gone for naught. If humanity and human life, on the other

hand, are constituent parts of nature, nature's teachings are to be found, not simply in the fiery volcano or the devouring leopard, but also in the generous hand that rescues from danger, and the pitying care that binds and heals the sufferer's wounds. Animal evolution culminates in human evolution, and human evolution culminates in the unfolding and perfection of the spiritual nature. As the end and fruit is indisputably moral, by what logic shall we declare that the process and law are devoid of ethical import?

In the next place it is worthy of notice, and a most proper plea in mitigation of the charges made, that those parts and actions in nature, which are most criticised as evil, are never ends in themselves, but merely means and intermediate steps to the goal of good. This fierce competition in the multitude of living beings; this devouring of insect by bird and mouse, and destruction of bird and mouse by cat and hawk, and the wiping out of the species unfitted to maintain themselves in the painful struggle,—each of these processes is useful to the higher ends towards which the current of life moves. It is this that fills each nook with life, makes the mole conquer the underworld of the ground and the bird the realm of air, and makes each living species strive and develop itself to the utmost. It is this that sharpens the eyes of the lynx and the hearing of the deer, and gives swiftness to the antelope and the horse. It is this that moulds dull sensation into these varied and marvelous instincts of bee and moth, and, as the struggle goes on, leads rigid instinct up to flexile cunning and adaptive intelligence; and, among the higher animals, develops in each race, according

to its peculiar dangers or opportunities, emotions of fidelity or sympathy, faculties of memory or attention, of song or reason; and in man, at length, constitutes mind and conscience the controlling powers, and makes success in the battle of life the prize of courage, perseverance, mutual devotion, and self-sacrifice. Although on the lower levels the stern law of natural selection produces the grasping parasite and the voracious reptile, and in the early stages gives the advantage to the hard and selfish, yet, as the evolution continues, this very "Moloch of natural selection," as it has been called, refines and elevates its products age by age. It annihilates the ferocious monsters of the reptilian age; it reduces the barnacle to immobility; it makes the slave-holding ant helpless and the human slave owner a fossil of the past. It breeds out of the ferocious wolf-tribe the affectionate and devoted dog, and allows no people to survive unless that people makes justice and neighborly assistance and good-will the recognized laws of its national life. Each layer of olden slime and blood is a fertilizing alluvium which produces the later glory of spiritual blossom and of righteous, kindly fruit.

Moreover, a closer study of nature shows even more than this. It shows that, even in the lower and rudimentary stages of life, there is an altruism contemporaneous with the egoism of evolution. There is "a struggle for others," as Professor Drummond has well phrased it, conjoined with the struggle for self, constantly restraining selfishness, often dominant over it even in low ranks of life, and in the larger and higher families of the natural kingdom always preponderant.

A superficial acquaintance with the facts of evolution brings out as its prominent features such traits as struggle, selfishness and cruelty. But a deeper and keener study shows that from the outset of life there have been principles of super-fecundity and overflow present, and there have been instincts of solidarity and sympathy involved that irresistibly carry the individual beyond the circle of his own interests. In the simplest cell which, in obedience to the expansive tendency of life, splits into two, or forms, with its excess of protoplasm, the nucleus of a new cell, the philosophic eye beholds the germ of the moral law and the promise of the beatitudes. Wherever vitality is at its best, it is characterized by a constant overplus of production beyond the needs of self-maintenance, and therefore an overflow of the fountain of being that carries its current beyond the bounds of self and commingles the waters of life. Altruistic giving is the inseparable correlate of this vital over-production. A certain disinterestedness and outgoing of largess and sympathy is as characteristic of healthy life as for the mother of a new-born babe to give her milk to the babe. In the sacred unity and natural bond that keeps the ocean in its bed and holds the parent sheep to the duty of suckling her helpless lambkin, we see the germ of that moral necessity that blossoms in a Socrates' conscience or a Christ's self-sacrifice.

Professor Huxley presents the cosmic struggle for existence as demanding the opposite conduct from goodness and virtue: not self-restraint, but ruthless self-assertion, and the characteristic qualities of ape and tiger. By this he must mean, if his argument is

to be effective, such qualities as those of cruelty, voracity, thievery, and wantonness. On the contrary, even the tiger's survival and success demanded from him self-restraint and care for others. Had this self-assertion and devouring appetite been indeed "ruthless," and not checked themselves in the presence of his mate and his cubs and been ready to share his booty with them, his line would have perished with the first generation. Did the apes not associate themselves in bands, combining their forces for mutual assistance and defense, how could this species of creature, so comparatively weak physically, destitute of tusks, fangs, horns, or armor, have sustained itself against its far more powerful enemies? It is not merely in the human species, but also throughout the whole realm of life below, that altruism and social bonds manifest themselves; self-will at due times and occasions represses itself; and if it will not voluntarily yield and curb its excesses, then it is sternly enforced to do so by an inexorable Nemesis.

Foremost among these factors that enforce co-operation and more or less of altruism, are those central facts in the animal kingdom, sex and infant weakness. Above the very lowest orders of existence, no animal and few of the higher plants can reproduce their species without a mate, nor can the young survive without parental care. Reproduction is no less fundamental to life than nutrition. And if the necessity of feeding themselves is the sure producer of egoism in all forms of flesh and blood, the necessity of pleasing their mates and taking care of their young just as surely fosters altruism.

Of course we should not attribute to the animal mother the same affection and conscious self-denial that characterize a human mother. But throughout every realm of natural history, above the microscopic, there are instincts that carry the individual beyond his own needs, and often quite contrary to his own ease, comfort, and self-preservation; because they are demanded by the race. The universal conditions of reproduction, are, first, giving; and, next, self-sacrifice. See, in the case of the flowers, how the anther gives to the stigma the fertilizing pollen that through microscopic gateways penetrates to the inmost heart of the pistil; how, with the first beginning of the seed, the petals begin to wither, turning into the germs the sap on which they might have lived, and packing around each tiny germ the stores of starch and albumen which shall feed their hunger when the sun calls them forth to life with the spring. "Every flower in the world," Henry Drummond well says, "lives for others. It sets aside something costly, a gift to the future, brought into the world and paid for by its own demise. Every seed, every egg, is a tithe of love." Paternity implies a regard for another, more or less permanent. Maternity is synonymous with self-sacrifice.

As we look through the annals of natural history, what curious and even romantic details are beheld growing from these fruitful roots! We see the sand-wasp, that never beholds its offspring, nevertheless laboriously laying up for its grubs a provision of fresh food in a sealed storehouse; the paternal pipe-fish, carrying the eggs of its offspring about in a pouch till they are

hatched; the father-nightingale, feeding the mother regularly while she is sitting on the nest; the indignant gander, valorously protecting its little brood against the intrusive stranger; the mother lioness, intercepting with the shield of her own body the lance which threatens her cub,—what resplendent and touching testimonies do the annals of science furnish to refute the calumny that the cosmic order is one solely or chiefly of ruthless self-assertion!

No doubt, this parental love was in the beginning crude, narrow, and hard. Evolution had to give it long and patient polishing before the bitter buds, the dwarfish, crumpled cotyledons, became the lovely and stately blossoms of disinterested and unswerving affection that we admire to-day. But the important thing to notice is that the moral germ was there; something unique in its kind and divine in its possibilities. As Professor Romanes has well said: "The greatest of all distinctions in biology, when it first arises, is thus seen to be in its potentiality rather than in its origin. The distinction between a nature that can and a nature that cannot possess moral power is capital." Once established in the world, this altruistic bud was sure to increase and sweeten. Loveless parents meant neglected, stunted dying offspring. But the loving father and mother saved and improved their offspring and made more loving descendants. The fostering affection, however little it matters not, was bound to be preserved and accumulated by that best of bankers, heredity, at compound interest. Each succeeding family in this royal line is richer in the elements that make for progress. The little group of

father, mother, and offspring act together, and are stronger for their union. New forces of sympathy, brotherhood, and devotion spring up within the holy circle; and in the family, evolution gains a new instrument and ally, a daily generator and guardian of the social and moral forces through which human progress is attained.

All these parental feelings, it may be urged, however, are but enlargements and prolongations, so to speak, of self. The offspring belongs to the mother, and her care of it has, therefore, nothing properly disinterested about it. Outside this family circle can we find in the system of nature any examples of mutual help, any instances of truly disinterested sympathy and cooperation?

Most assuredly we can. He who cannot see them, but perceives in the cosmic order only a gladiatorial pit, either has only a meagre knowledge of natural history, or wilfully closes his eyes to its nobler chapters.

At the dawn of animate existence, every life was probably a single cell, as we still see in the case of the amœba and other protozoa. But this self-sufficiency leads to nothing in evolution. For the development process to advance, it must resort to the cooperative principle. So we have compound plants and flowers; the colonies and groups in which the lower animals club together their forces; the communal life of the polyps, the sponges, and the bees, where each member or group takes up its respective share of labor for the public good; one set drawing in the food, a second digesting it, assimilating and storing it away; a third producing buds, seeds or eggs.

As we direct our glance a little higher up the ladder of life, we see a still more interesting case of mutual aid in those notable interchanges of good services between blossom and insect, to which we owe all that is beautiful and fragrant in the floral world. In its inmost heart the flower spreads a banquet of honey, and marks the road to it with showy or conspicuous petals or some sweet perfume, that even at night will guide the insect guest to the nectar. As each bee or moth or butterfly helps itself from the table of its floral host, it pays for all it takes by carrying the fertilizing pollen to the neighboring flower, and ensuring the preservation and multiplication of the species that has fed it. Thus plant and insect develop together. Those plants survive and multiply most that hide their honey and pollen best from hostile marauders, but leave some clue to guide their insect helpers. The bee and the moth quicken in intelligence and helpfulness, because those who make the most skilful go-betweens will best feed themselves and best propagate the plants that will feed their descendants.

Even on this low range in the animate world, it is evident that "those creatures succeed best who, in fulfilling their own life, also compass the good of other beings." The farther and higher we pursue our investigation, the more numerous and striking are the illustrations of this reciprocity and helpfulness. The beetles assist each other in rolling up the pellets of manure in which they bury their eggs. Many caterpillars weave tents in common. Beavers combine to cut down logs and build their dams and communal huts. Wolves, wild-dogs, and jackals do their hunting

in packs. Rabbits, sheep, chamois, and rooks give each other signals of danger.[1] Among bees, the neuters, who never become mothers, watch over the eggs and cocoons as if these were their own. The agricultural ants sow in common, and harvest and store their crops in granaries to use in common, for general sustenance. According to Forel, the fundamental feature in the life of many species of ants is the obligation of every ant to share its food, already swallowed and digested, with every member of the community who may apply for it. If an ant which has its crop full is too selfish to regurgitate a part of it for the use of a hungry comrade, it will be treated as an enemy.

The instances of sympathy and self-sacrificing kindness among animals are as numerous as they are interesting. Sir James Malcolm personally told Professor Romanes of a monkey on shipboard, who, when its companion monkey fell overboard, threw to it a cord, the other end of which was tied around its own body.[2] Mrs. Olive Thorne Miller, in a recent lecture, told of a cedar-bird that she had known to take charge of a nest of young robins whose parents had been killed, and to bring up the brood of orphans with motherly care. Mr. Belt tells of a number of cases where he has seen ants that had been buried under clay or pebbles released by their neighbors, often with great labor.[3] When seals, buffaloes or deer are attacked, the males put the mothers and young and weak of the

[1] Darwin, Descent of Man, p. 100.

[2] Romanes, Animal Intelligence, p. 475.

[3] Naturalist in Nicaragua, 1874, p. 26.

herd in the least exposed place, and go to the front to meet the enemy.[1]

Thomas Edward, the Scotch naturalist, having wounded a tern, or sea-swallow, so that it could not fly, saw it lifted up by two unwounded comrades and carried out to a rock in the sea beyond his reach.[2]

The weasel, which, as Rev. J. G. Wood relates, came to pick up and carry away an injured comrade; the rats, who led a sightless comrade by a straw;[3] the blind pelican, who was fed by neighbors on fish brought many miles;[4] the gander that guided his blind comrade about by gently taking her neck in his bill;[5] the old baboon, who came down from his place of safety on the hill to force his way through a pack of dogs and carry off a young baboon that had remained behind in peril,[6]—these instances of tender feeling and generous deeds might be called the delightful romances of natural history, were it not that every one of them is a well-attested fact. They are only a few among many similar cases.

The scientific skeptic may object that none of these incidents affords proof of conscious self-devotion in the animal world, but only of a blind instinct. Among human beings we should certainly call them altruistic —nay, moral. Why should we reckon them unconscious and egoistic when occurring among animals?

[1] Thomson, Passions of Animals, p. 306, and Darwin, Descent of man, p. 101.

[2] Romanes, Animal Intelligence, p. 275.

[3] Seelenleben der Thiere, p. 64.

[4] Darwin, Descent of Man, p. 102.

[5] Romanes, Animal Intelligence, p. 272.

[6] Darwin, Descent of Man, p. 101.

But if they are illustrations of the action of blind instinct, then all the stronger is the disproof of the charge that nature has no sanction and command except for self-interest. All the stronger is the proof that there is an innate tendency, rooted in the constitution of nature and all social things, that irresistibly expresses itself in sympathetic impulses and self-sacrificing kindnesses.

Finally, we may notice that nature, instead of frowning down and repressing this altruistic tendency, has constantly favored and sanctioned it. It has, indeed, been the very channel of the higher evolution of life. If we run over the names of the commoner and more numerous tribes of animals, the birds, deer, gophers, seals, kangaroos, antelopes, mice, and rabbits, or, going lower down, bees, ants, and grasshoppers, almost all are gregarious animals. The social animals have an immense preponderance over the unsocial. The carnivora, whose cruel self-seeking Professor Huxley presents as the type and condition of success in the competitions of nature, are relatively very few in number. They are the exceptions, not the normal type, any more than the train-robber and the Tammany "pantata" are typical Americans. Almost everywhere these species are dying out. "The dragons of the prime," who "tear each other in their slime," and who have been presented as the true type of nature, "red in tooth and claw," lie in their fossil cemeteries, eternal witnesses to the judicial sentence which nature has pronounced upon them and their ways. Never in the annals of zoology was there such a Waterloo (as Mr. Fiske has well called it) as these giant Saurians

met. Among the carnivora that still survive it is evident that, in spite of their terrible claws, or fangs, and their strength and agility, these depredators and enemies of their fellows are everywhere falling behind in the race of life. Neither their natural weapons nor their terrible energy of self-seeking are equal, as aids to survival and multiplication, to the mutual help and greater intelligence of the social animals. Darwin's dictum, that "those communities which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best," is found to be the fact and law of animal evolution.

Professor Huxley charges that man, having progressed because of those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger, now that he has become civilized and moralized would kick down the ladder by which he mounted. On the contrary, it has never been by tigerish cruelty, or a monkey-like wantonness, selfishness, or malicious mischievousness, that man has reached his superior position. These qualities, on the contrary, have arrested the progress of ape and tiger. Man has gone above them because of his larger share of the altruistic and social impulses, and the mutual help and cooperative industry which have tided the feeble over periods of weakness, and stimulated intelligence and skill as nothing else has done.

So far from primitive man being a solitary, blond beast of prey, his hand against every man, whose fundamental instinct was cruelty and injury to others, as Nietzsche portrays him, the discoveries of archæology show, on the contrary, that the earliest men we know were already social beings and united in con-

siderable communities. The kitchen-middens of quarternary man, discovered and investigated by Steenstrup, have a thickness of three metres in some places, and must have been formed by a very numerous horde of men. "The piles of horses' bones at Solutre," says Max Nordau, in his work on Degeneration, "are so enormous as quite to preclude the idea that a single hunter, or even any but a very large body of allied hunters, could have collected and killed such a large number of horses in one place. As far as our view penetrates into historic time, every discovery shows us primitive man as a gregarious animal, who could not possibly have maintained himself, if he had not possessed the instincts which are presupposed in life in a community, viz., sympathy, the feeling of solidarity, and a certain degree of unselfishness. We find these instincts already existent in apes."

"The splendid beast of prey," whom the worshippers of self would present as the typical human type, is not only pernicious to the species, but, as Dr. Nordau points out,[1] is pernicious to itself also. "It rages against itself; it annihilates itself. The biological truth is that constant self-restraint is a necessity of existence, as much for the strongest as for the weakest. It is the activity of the highest human cerebral centres. If these are not exercised, they waste away; *i. e.*, man ceases to be man; the pretended 'over-man' becomes sub-human,—in other words, a beast. By the relaxation, or breaking up of the mechanism of inhibition in the brain, the organism sinks into irrecoverable anarchy in its constituent

[1] Nordau, Degeneration, p. 431.

parts ; and this leads, with absolute certainty, to ruin, to disease, madness, and death, even if no resistance results from the external world against the frenzied egoism of the unbridled individual."

In these social and altruistic impulses of the higher orders of animal life, the philosophic investigator sees plainly the great uplifting causes of vital evolution. This social and altruistic life is conditioned upon the rudimentary moral sense of the species.

Unless, in the members of a group of birds, there is an incipient sense of justice, which leads them to respect the tid-bit which a neighbor has found, or to chastise together the member who has lazily and selfishly appropriated the nest of a fellow bird, the social group would quickly fall to pieces. All naturalists who have studied gregarious species, have noticed amongst them a certain sense of personal rights and the duty of just dealing with their fellow-members in the group. The dogs in Constantinople have each their special street or alley, the invasion of which they resolutely resist. The prairie-dog and the beaver have their respective resting-places, which their comrades respect.

Even in the animal kingdom, we thus find the moral disposition to exist in a more or less developed form. When we reach the human sphere, that which especially characterizes its progress is the greater and greater restriction of selfish and unmoral competition by the growing sense of sympathy and justice in the community. Even among barbarians, the qualities that make a tribe the fittest to survive are not merely strength of body, ferocity of disposition, and keen-

ness in taking advantage of one's fellow, but rather the possession of trustworthy, helpful, and loyal dispositions. Take a tribe of savages, among whom robbery, murder, licentiousness, cannibalism, and infanticide prevail. Is it not plain, from the nature of the case, that such tribes are not likely to leave abundant offspring? Is it not the testimony of all travelers, that such tribes are decaying tribes, yearly diminishing, tribes on whose head nature has already pronounced sentence?

When, from the low state of morals among certain Australian and African savages, it is argued that we have here the proof and illustration of the general absence of moral qualities in primitive humanity, the real sequence of cause and effect is reversed. It is, on the contrary, precisely because such tribes have been deficient in average moral quality, that they have failed to march upward on the road of civilization with the rest of mankind, and have fallen into these bog-holes of savage degradation. It is only when humanity is spurred on by conscience to the faithful discharge of great duties, that our race develops to the full stature of its manhood.

Natural history, archæology, and biology all combine their testimony to show the error of that view which denies to nature any moral lesson or tendency, and sees in evolution simply a cruel and selfish struggle. The sympathetic instinct and moral necessity that man feels belong to no artificial world opposed to the great order of the universe. They are rooted deep in those same natural bonds and sacred unities which, wherever red blood flows in the veins, have

conditioned the very continuance of the species on the faithful discharge by each generation of their duty to others besides themselves. Vice and injustice are ever destroying themselves. The more single-eyed is selfishness, the more likely it is to starve itself to death. It is a matter of simple scientific observation that the preponderance of selfishness among a family or a people, and the decay of that family or people, go together. The predominance of egotism is a physiological sign that the vitality of the species is exhausted; the family instinct dies out, and the individuals lose their ability to experience normal and natural love, and cease to perpetuate themselves.

As Dr. Nordau has pointed out: "We possess an unfailing means of determining the exact degree of vital energy in a given species, race or nation, in the proportion between the egotism and altruism of the individuals contained in it. The larger the number of beings who place their own interests higher than all the duties of solidarity and the ideals of the development of the species, the nearer is the species to the end of its vital career. While, on the other hand, the more individuals there are in a nation who have an instinct within them, impelling them to deeds of heroism, self-abnegation, and sacrifice for the community, the more potent are the vital energies of the race" ("The Conventional Lies of Civilization," p. 270).

The best of social fertilizers, then, are affection and sympathy. Virtue has a self-propagating power. Self-sacrifice, emptying the soul of the dregs of selfishness, and filling it with the living water of the

Eternal Spirit, makes harvests bourgeon and ripen, wherever its irrigating stream spreads abroad. Morality is no invention of priests, statesmen, or philosophers. It is an irresistible growth of the human heart, the fairest blossom, the age-long victory and product of that Divine Life of the universe that has ever moved onward from chaos to cosmos, from carnal to spiritual. That lustrous march is no drama of red-toothed carnage, but a patient ascent through successive planes of wider and more intimate cooperation, fusing individuals in families, families in tribes, tribes in nations, and nations in the universal family of God's children, in which Jew and Greek, male and female, black and white, must have their equal right and place before the tribunal of Christian equity and sympathy. The highest efflorescence on the century-plant of cosmic life, the message of nature, as of Scripture, is Love.

The universe is God's unfenced and all-inclusive communion table; and every act of humane ministration, every helpful hand stretched out to the weak or fallen is a sacred rite in its holy Eucharist.

CHAPTER III.

THE AGNOSTIC'S DIFFICULTIES AND THE KNOWABILITY OF DIVINE REALITIES.

At the threshold of the investigation of the special problems presented by the relations of science to religion there lies the preliminary question: What can we know in religious things, and how?

This is properly a question of pure metaphysics, with which science has nothing to do, and there ought not to be upon this point any conflict between the scientific and the religious world. Science may properly declare what she has learned and how she has learned it. But when she proceeds to determine what and how alone it is possible to know anything, and engages in analyses of consciousness, in investigations of the laws of thought, and clumsily would spin again, over the eyes of faith, the subtle logical webs of Hume and Kant, then it is evident that science has strayed into the realm of metaphysics and is trying "her prentice hand" upon the problems of philosophy.

Nevertheless, though but an interloper and a neophyte herself in this field, or rather just for this reason, science has of late assumed absolute authority in the domain of the knowable, and has summarily ordered religion into close confinement. The brilliant successes of modern science,—rivalling all wonders of

the romancers, seven-leagued boots, lamp of Aladdin, wand of fairy, or what not,—these marvelous achievements have made her believe that her favorite methods are the only ones by which anything is to be known. He who would build up solid structures of fact, not air-castles of thought, must work, science tells us, by observation, induction, and verification. He must concern himself, so science orders, only with what is discernible by sense, and must ignore the suprasensible. All that we can know is phenomena. Realities can never be reached. Things in themselves are far beyond our knowledge. The idea of immaterial spirit must be assigned, as Vogt commands, to a place among speculative fables. Substance, essence, soul,—these are but high-sounding terms which cover so many chimeras. Certainly, it is urged, it is not for man to know God. It is not for the finite to think to find out the Infinite. All conceptions involving infinity,—such as creation, self-existence, eternity, absolute reality (Herbert Spencer labors at length to show in his First Principles),—involve the inconceivable; and though by our familiarity with the sounds we may think we understand them, they are really but "pseudo-ideas, symbolic conceptions of the illegitimate order." "The power which the universe manifests is utterly inscrutable," a conclusion to which Professors Huxley and Tyndall gave repeated and emphatic "Amens." When the question is asked, "Who made the universe?" Professor Tyndall replied, "As far as I can see, there is no quality in the human intellect which is fit to be applied to the solution of the problem. It entirely transcends us."

Science thus denies to religion a foothold in the realm of the knowable. The objects which she would worship are banished into an impenetrable darkness, and all that is left for her is to cover her head and veil her face before the mysterious realm. In the solemn emotions of the heart she may indulge herself freely, if she likes; but she must not presume to fashion the vague thought of that which she reveres into any definite shape. She must not venture to speak of that which she adores as if it were in any sense known to her. "The only language concerning the divine," as Renan says, "that does not degrade God is silence."

There is in this attitude a semblance of a deeper religiousness. Spencer calls it "the true humility"; Renan characterizes it as "the effect of a profound piety, trembling lest it blaspheme." But it is in truth, the subtlest and most dangerous attack on religion. The old-fashioned atheism said bluntly, "There is no God," and the extremity of its folly was its own refutal. The infidelity of to-day says, "Whether or not there is any God, we can know nothing at all about Him, and so ought not to waste our time by taking Him into consideration. If it pleases you, however, to embrace with the deepest longings of your nature this blank mystery; if, debarred from knowing, you find consolation nevertheless in the exercise of your creative faculties, in fashioning the mystery in accordance with your words, why then," say Tyndall and Huxley, "do so; only have regard enough for propriety and the exclusive prerogatives of science to confine your worship to that of the

silent sort at the altar of the unknown and the unknowable."

Practically, there is little difference between this theory of spiritual nescience and outright denial of spiritual existence. The assurance that we are, and must always remain, in dense ignorance of spiritual things kills the hope of heaven and the reverence for the divine. It takes from conscience its authority, and withers every religious emotion. Who can worship an absolute darkness, an utter silence? If the absolute reality be utterly inscrutable there is no reason to think of it under one aspect more than any other. It may as likely be cruel as kind, contemptible as venerable, vile and treacherous as majestic and faithful. If we ought to revere it, there ought to be something in it cognizable as worthy of reverence. Why, if it be utterly unknowable, should we not hate it as rightly as love it, despise it instead of adoring it? To make God a name sweeter, grander, more venerated than all others, it must be more than a piece of blank paper. To build that temple of religion where songs of praise and thanksgiving, aspirations for a better life, hopes of a brighter and eternal home and vows of solemn consecration spontaneously spring from the heart and ascend worthily and not in bitter mockery, we need other material than an eye-blinking fog-bank.

That know-nothingism in religion, then, which certain scientific cliques would establish, has not the first shred of a claim to be considered its best friend. As little claim has it to be founded on truth or clear ideas. It is true enough that no sense-observation

can show us spiritual things. But neither does sense restrict itself to the horizon of the visible, the tangible, and the sensible. Tyndall justly speaks of "that region inaccessible to sense, which embraces so much of the intellectual life of the investigator." When that which the microscope fails to see is regarded as non-existent, "then I think," he says, "the microscope begins to play a mischievous part," and he proceeds to point out many cases where structure and structural changes must be believed to exist although the microscope can make nothing of them.

As it is in mineralogy and biology, so it is in chemistry, thermo-dynamics, and optics. What is the whole of these, as systematized sciences, built upon? Upon the assumption of the existence of the molecule, the atom, and the ether. Yet of these units of matter how many have been isolated, separately weighed, measured, or touched? Of their ceaseless motions how many have been felt or seen? Of this omnipresent ether, some eleven trillion times, or more, as extensive as ordinary matter, how many particles, what smallest quantity, has been observed? Not one. The largest molecule, it is calculated, is a thousand times smaller than any particle the microscope can separately discern and the ether is immensely subtler even than this.

Again, let the scientist tell us, why it is that in any case that he chooses of outward observation, he trusts the report of his senses as assuring him of any outward fact? You assume, for example, that when your senses observe or verify anything, then you have something you can confide in. Why so? Do you

say that you have learned from experience on other occasions that the impressions of your senses are correctly conformed to the permanent something impressing them? But in reality this does not establish the permanent something as outside of yourself. It may be, perhaps, only a coherent abiding group of subjective sensations. In reality no experience of the correctness of the sense upon other occasions, however many, suffices to show that it was not wrong in this. A certain antecedent and a certain consequent may have been connected for a hundred million of times, and yet the next time (a possibility of which Mr. Babbage's calculating machine furnishes an actual instance) the consequent may be different. So far from this trust in our senses being furnished by experience, it is what always does and must precede experience. It is what alone makes experience possible and shows it to be applicable. As Professor Huxley has acknowledged, this trust in the veracity of our senses at the very moment that we make the sensory observations is but an assumption, and when that moment has passed, it is but an "unverifiable hypothesis."[1] Why, then, do we make such an assumption, such an "unverifiable hypothesis"? Because of the mental need, because it is an intuition of our reason, or, as Professor Bain calls it, "the foremost of the instinctive tendencies of the mind." Again, before the physicist considers that he really understands the object that he has found, before he has any true scientific knowledge of it, he feels that he must classify it, refer its phenomena to some law

[1] *Popular Science Monthly*, March, 1875, p. 576.

in accordance with which it takes place, some force that has produced it. Why is this? Again it must be answered, it is from a mental need, the instinct of natural order, of constant derivation of effect from cause.

It is the intuitive principle, then, that in science supplies the cement that binds the loose fact-grains of observation into coherent and valuable structures. The lowest stories of the scientific temple cannot be built up without this, and the higher still more demand it. The discerning physicist must recognize that the grandest victories of science are those which it has won by the aid of the imagination beyond the bounds of the visible. Geometry, *e. g.*, is throughout a work of mental architecture, grounded upon and guided by pure mental insight of space. Had geometrical truths required for their acceptance demonstration from observation we should have known hardly a single proposition. An exact right-angle has no existence as matter of experience. A perfect sphere is unattainable in practice. Arithmetic, algebra, astronomy, are ideal constructions, resting on the metaphysical conception of number, and nowhere conforming to exactly ascertained fact. In electricity, magnetism, thermo-dynamics, the subtile analyses of modern investigators have banished altogether the former theories of material fluids, and substituted the conception of invisible forces. The power that moulds the crystal, that attracts the magnet, that moves along the electric wire, can be seen only by the mental eye. Observed facts form, of course, the starting-point of knowledge, but they do not constitute its limit.

Reason is not to be chained around the ankle with retorts and balances, like a convict with ball and chain. The wise savant must admit, as the distinguished Bertholet expressly has done, that "there may be something else to conceive, without knowing it experimentally, than connections of phenomena, and that outside the limits where positive science asserts itself it may be possible, without excess of mysticism, to perceive the outlines, and to trace the sketch of a certain ideal science where first principles, causes, and ends find their place, and legitimately support it." "It is not," in truth, as Caro has well said, "the new fact which constitutes a discovery." It is "the idea which attaches itself to the fact. Facts are neither great nor little in themselves. The grandeur is in the idea which marshals them. Those who make discoveries are those who present us with a new idea which puts old or petty facts in a striking light. And this comes not so much from an induction as from an instinctive fore-feeling of the order of nature. So far from the mind being a blank tablet, learning everything from experience, the fact is that experience is only fruitful when it is guided by something that goes before and beyond facts, which solicits them, which, impelled by the momentum of the innate idea, interrogates nature, compels it under its urgent catechizings to deliver up its secret, revealing as a reality of nature the law hitherto but dreamed of by the thinker."

Even in the scientific domain, then, comparatively little can be known unless the external vision be supplemented by the inward sight and the sense-percep-

tion be enlarged by the mental intuition. And in the religious world it is by the same means that we learn those spiritual phenomena,—personality, free-will, sense of duty,—and those grand ideas, right and wrong, infinity, perfection, and divinity, that are the ineradicable roots of faith and piety. Not only is there more than one road to the land of knowledge, but he who would reach its richest mines, its grandest spiritual truths, must take the road of spiritual discernment. Science has failed to find them, and declared them undiscoverable, simply because it has traveled on the wrong path and used the wrong instruments. To seek to learn the presence of the moral law by an electrometer, or to test for the existence of the soul with litmus paper, or to discover God by the spectroscope, is as fruitless a quest, and fruitless for the same reason, as to seek to taste a sound, or to verify the beauty of the Sistine Madonna by making a chemical analysis of the pigments used upon it. In such cases the failure to observe the objects searched for does not demonstrate their non-existence, but simply the application to the inquiry of wrong methods. Against the failure of the sense to discover anything, I put the success of the spirit. Not till the perfume of the rose is disproved by the inability of the eye to see it; not till spherical geometry is shown false by the undiscoverability in nature of a perfect circle or by the absence of any absolute verification of the theorems concerning it, may the negative testimony of outward observation avail aught against the positive testimony of the religious faculties.

But intuition and instinct, we shall be told, are full of illusions, and moreover have no safeguard such as verification affords to observation. There is no method by which we can test them, to distinguish the false from the true,—if there be any true. And so far from having a divine origin, and testifying legitimately to eternal and universal truths, they are, in reality, like our prejudices and our tastes, products of human experience. Our intuitions are thus subject to the same conditions as our experience, and give no absolute truth. The axioms of geometry, as Professor Helmholtz has shown, though necessary truths to us, may be false in another sphere. Imagine beings living and moving on the surface of a sphere, able to perceive nothing but what is on the surface, insensible to all else. The axioms of Euclid would not there be valid. The axiom, for instance, that there is only one shortest line between two points would not, on such a sphere, be the truth. For between two diametrically opposite points an infinite number of shortest lines, all of equal length, could be drawn. Similarly, other axioms and propositions of our geometry would no longer hold good.

Now, what shall we say to this? We willingly admit that not unfrequently what are mere prejudices or ungrounded prepossessions, pass themselves off or are mistaken, for genuine intuitions. We admit that intuitions are not, at the first, mature or purified from other elements, and that it takes great carefulness to disentangle and discriminate them from the other things with which they are involved. They come into the world not as full-formed powers, but rather

as the capacities and potentialities of mental life. Only gradually do these embryo faculties unfold, and while experience is not their cause, it is undoubtedly the occasion and condition of their development. Between their adult and their rudimentary phase there is as wide a difference as between the grown bird and the egg. That the manifestations of the human intuitions should vary or should sometimes, especially among savage tribes, be absent altogether, is, then, no evidence against their trustworthiness or reality. If they sometimes delude us, it is but the same thing that the senses do. Scarcely a week passes, even with persons of intelligence, in which there is not more or less illusion of the perceptive faculties.

But these observations of sense you say are verified by other observations of the same sense or other senses, or, if illusions, are corrected by their disagreement with such other observations. But what verification have intuitions? The same I answer as your perceptions. When you have verified one perception by another, what do you verify your verification by? If it has no verification, how is it any better guarantee than the preceding perception? If it has a verification, what is it—another perception? something outside of itself, or in itself? As long as verification is sought in further observations, in corroborations not self-evident, we must continue our search for some more valid verification. We can stop only when we come to some self-evident truth, which needs no external buttress. We always do rest, and can only rest, our perceptive verifications at last in some intui-

tion. "Intuition has no verification; and consequently no safeguard," do you say? I reply: "It is its own verification and safeguard. Verification itself is preceded and conditioned upon it."

How, then, if we are cut off from perceptive corroboration, can we distinguish between a false and a true intuition? The test is found in mental analysis. The guarantee of true intuitions is their simplicity, irreducibility, ultimateness, universality, above all, their necessity. The best criterion of a truth, as Herbert Spencer declares, is "the inconceivability of its negation," and the mark of reality is "inexpugnable persistence in consciousness." There are conditions under which the intuitions may not be applicable. In a world of two dimensions the axioms of geometry of three dimensions would not of course hold true. But this does not prove that the axioms and demonstrations of Euclid are false; only that conditions may be conceived in which they would not apply. The axioms and demonstrations are true eternally, even though nowhere in nature should be found the conditions in which they could be applied and realized.

Here we are met by the objections of the evolutionist school, that these intuitions are really but products of the experience of the race,—mental habits formed by association and consolidated by inheritance, and thus ingrained in the cerebral structure of each descendant,—so that on the application of the appropriate stimulus, the ideas of the man of to-day are given the same forms as they had in his ancestor.

As regards this I would remark, in the first place, that it is an explanation quite inconsistent with the

main theory, the evolution hypothesis, of those who offer it. The law of evolution is the ascent from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the more complex, from the instinctive to the rational. But according to this theory the habits and powers which are now involuntary and unconscious were formerly more voluntary and conscious. The earlier faculties of animals, for example, were the higher, and their present state a degeneration. Why do we give to the instincts of the bee, the wasp, the beaver, a special place in our thoughts, rather than suppose them to be ordinary exercises of the conscious reason of the creature? Because the knowledge which the operations of instinct exhibit, the acquaintance with physical and physiological laws, and even with the mental qualities and dispositions of other animals which it displays, and the processes of reasoning by which advantage is taken of them, do not seem to us attributable to the conscious mind of the animal without absurd incongruity with the limited intelligence of the creature in other respects. But the absurdity is just as great or greater to attribute it to the conscious knowledge and reasoning of the same species in earlier generations. It is true enough that in man many actions become instinctive and mechanical as the result of a previous intellectual operation of the self-conscious or reasoning kind. But the idea that instinct in all other animals has the same origin, the Duke of Argyll rightly calls "a dream due to the exaggerated anthropomorphism of those very philosophers who are most apt to denounce this sort of error in others. . . . The theory of experience assumes

the preexistence of the very powers for which it professes to account. The very lowest of the faculties by which experience is acquired is imitation. But the desire to imitate must be as instinctive as the organs are hereditary by which imitation is effected." Then follow in their order all the higher faculties and ideas, such as those of space, time, law, purpose, cause, by which the lessons of experience are put together into an ordered whole. Every step in this process supposes the preexistence of powers and tendencies anterior to experience, instinctive and innate. As Herbert Spencer himself has truly said, "Those who contend that knowledge results wholly from the experiences of the individual, fall into an error as great as if they were to ascribe all bodily growth and structure to exercise, forgetting the innate tendency to assume the adult form." But to assign it all to the experience of the individual's ancestors equally neglects the main-factor in the case, the innate tendencies not only of physical structure but of mental habit, that must have preexisted before these creatures could have learned anything at all from experience.

So, too, he who explains our natural beliefs as mere unmeaning agglutinations from the lower elements of our experience, formed by the association of ideas, commits the error of overlooking the significant fact involved in those laws of association themselves. "For the very idea of association," as has been well pointed out, supposes a guiding impulse. How can we classify without a standard of classification? How can we connect without channels of connection? Laws of association are but the manifestation of pre-

determined associating tendencies or principles in the mind. Did not these exist, a man would be no more capable of learning from experience than an oyster is.

But let us grant for the moment the truth of the hereditary experience theory, and see what comes of it. Suppose we trace our instincts and intuitions back to the consolidated experience of our ancestors. Let us say that we think with the intelligence, not only of the individual, but of the whole race, from the earliest epoch of savage life down to the present. Then, if you wish, grant the further hypothesis of the evolutionist, that the man is the child of lower, ape-like forms, and these of still lower, and thus trace the race down to some simple ascidian or jelly-fish. Then resolve life into the happy combination of physical forces, and mind into the product of nervous action under the influence of the surrounding universe of matter. What then? If the mind is but a part and product of the universe of matter, then the laws of mind are but the laws of matter released and transformed. They are the laws of mind on this higher stage of existence, because of old they were the laws of matter in the lower stage. Our fundamental forms of thought, our universal instincts and necessary intuitions point, then, to universal facts of nature which engendered them. Instead of being subjective merely, or possibly delusive, they must correspond to the objective facts of nature to which their existence is due. They bear sure witness to the existence in the cosmic environment about them, of all those great principles, forces, and truths to which they are the natural and necessary self-adjustments. We know things, that is, as they

are; our knowledge of the universe, given in our universal instincts and necessary intuitions, though quite a limited knowledge, is true as far as it goes.

But if we may trust to those instincts and intuitions which testify to the existence of spiritual things sufficiently to accept such order of existence as a fact, can we know any more than the bare fact of such existence? Is not the whole nature of spiritual things, it is urged, shrouded in inscrutable mystery? The infinite, the divine, things in themselves, are not these beyond the possibility of knowledge to finite minds? Now it is true that the limits of our knowledge are very narrow, and also that within these narrow limits our knowledge is very imperfect. In truth, there is nothing that we know completely. Our bosom friend is a foreign kingdom to us. We have touched at most but at a port or two along the shores of his spiritual realm. There are multitudes of inlets hidden from us —vast provinces of his life and being which our most adventurous explorations have never reached. Even the most familiar object, the grass-blade, the drop of water, the simplest crystal, has something about it that is unknowable. To explain any one of these completely we must know the whole cosmos. Especially is this so in the religious realm. For, as Strauss has truly said, "there is nothing profound without mystery." Grander and brighter than all other truths, as spiritual truths are, their shadows naturally are equally pronounced. We shall always remain ignorant of much; probably we shall remain ignorant of even the greater part of what relates to the origin and history of the universe, the character, nature, and relations of God and the

soul. Nevertheless, to maintain that the darkness here is total is just as much of an error as to maintain that all is light. Though we cannot know divine things with complete fulness, we may yet know them in part. Though human intellect cannot fathom to the bottom the depths of spirit, nor follow out to infinity the divine curve, yet it can drop the plummet of thought deep enough to know whether this sacred mystery can be any form of matter or blind force; or whether it must be thought to be something higher. It can trace out a section of the infinite hyperbola sufficient to show whether the curve run by chance or law, towards the irrational or the rational, the evil or the good, the impersonal or the personal.

The boundary of the knowable, in the first place, is not a rigid, immovable limit. It gives to the pick of the scientist, to the probe of the philosopher, to the clearer eye of the seer. One age leaves it at a different place from that where it found it. If the realm of the unknown is never to cease to surround that of the known, it is not because no incursions can be made into it, but because, however much it gives up, its infinity is inexhaustible. It is a path that, though knowable in front as well as behind, is yet so boundless that, though the discoverer go on and on, he will still find ever lengthening vistas of the unexplored to invite him further still.

In the second place, it should be noticed that he who pronounces God absolutely unknowable erects his own inability as a bound for all attainments, and, moreover, as Martineau has pointed out, he implicitly attributes to that which he exalts as infinite and un-

limited a very restricting limitation and incapacity, viz., the inability to make himself known. For, evidently if there is no possibility of God's being known by man, then on the side of God there must be an equal impossibility of His making Himself known. To assert this seems to me to be a gross presumption rather than the humble and modest attitude that it has been reckoned. A genuine humble-mindedness would qualify even the confession of its own ignorance and inability with a doubt of that. The true agnostic ought rather to speak of God as one of the Hindu Upanishads speaks of Brahma, "Whosoever knows this truth, I do not know that I do not know him, *he* knows him."

In one sense the inconceivable is incredible. That which contradicts our reason is certainly not to be believed; for it cannot be even thought. In one sense the infinite is inconceivable,—it is unpicturable, that is, by the imagination. it is unrealizable by the wildest fancy. When the world-conquering ape, in the Chinese fable, aspired to subdue heaven also, Brahma held out his hand, and bade him leap over it. Over eye-wearying plains, over range after range of snow-clad summits the ape flew in his mighty bound, and alighted on the loftiest mountain peak that he had ever beheld. But, lo! it was but one of Brahma's fingers. So, in our mightiest flights of intellect, we can pass over but a finger's breadth of the divine.

Nevertheless, the inconceivable, in another sense, namely, that which overpasses our finite faculties not by contradiction, but by immensity, is certainly credible, is, indeed, absolutely necessary to thought. The

idea of the infinite, though not to be pictured, is one clearly thinkable. This infinity of immensity, that which is more than any finite, is a quite positive idea. Its vastness in quantity may debar us from enclosing it in our thought, but it does not prevent our grasping enough of it to know its quality. It may not be entirely comprehended; but it is not unintelligible in its essential characteristics. Magnitude and nature are different things. Because one cannot be encompassed in thought, we are not therefore utterly ignorant of the other. I cannot comprehend in my thought this immense ocean of air in which we live, and by which we breathe. Nevertheless, I know its nature, its chemical constituents, its pressure, elasticity, fluidity, and other mechanical properties, and I know that they are essentially the same in every part of the immense atmospheric sea that envelops the globe. Suppose the immensity of the air actually infinite instead of merely immensely beyond our comprehension, would its nature be any the less knowable? Take the infinite space that our reason compels us to believe in, and while our minds are unable, evidently, to realize its extent, yet can we think of it in any part, even at infinity, as anything else than space,—possessed of the same three dimensions, and capable of holding extended objects? Take a cylinder. Prolong it in thought to infinity. Though we cannot by utmost stretch of our imagination follow it there, yet we know that at infinity it would still keep all the characteristics of a cylinder, and none others. A section made at right-angles to the axis would always be a circle. Similarly with a trait or attribute of the divine; its

enlargement to the infinite scale does not change it into something else. Infinite power we know is still power; infinite wisdom without doubt is still wisdom. Love in the divine is not something entirely unknowable, but the sweetest and fullest form of affection. Spiritual things are not exalted by immensity or indeterminateness, but by perfection of character. God's infinitude is not exclusive, separating Him from His creation, but rather inclusive. Our knowledge is not so much erroneous as inadequate. We may trust it not only for what it tells, but for the direction in which it points us.

It seems to be thought that somehow that which we cannot or do not know must be necessarily antagonistic to what we do know, and puts it all in doubt. But that which must always remain unknown certainly cannot upset our present knowledge; it can do nothing to us that should frighten us, or unsettle our minds. And that which, though not yet known, may hereafter be brought within the field of our knowledge must, through that very possibility of being known, have harmonious relations with our present knowledge. We can come to understand the unknown only as we can find in it some likeness to the already known. The new knowledge will modify the old; it may add to it; but it will not be totally dissimilar or contradictory. This is the experience of all growth in knowledge hitherto, that the same order holds, new truths being unfolded from the old, not blankly opposing it. And we may rightly presume it for the remainder. "Doubt ought not to be thrown upon an intuition or a demonstration," as George

Henry Lewes has justly said, in his "Problems of Life and Mind," "merely because it is an intuition or a demonstration of one item in the great whole itself. If we can resolve an equation of the first or second degree, this absolute certainty is not disturbed because there are equations of the sixth degree which surpass our powers. . . . The existence of an unknown quantity does not affect the accuracy of calculations founded on the known quantities of the element." Certainly, from the mere possibility, if there be such a possibility, of an upsettal of our present ideas (sometime or somehow; no one pretends to say when or how) no sensible man should discard all the solidly grounded truths already attained. The logical vice involved in the argument of Spencer and the agnostic school in general is, in fact, the very one that savants and logicians have blamed theologians for falling into. The agnostic school, it will be found, always starts with some, generally with a great many, assumptions as to the infinite and absolute,—what they are, and what they imply,—and from these they reason down towards the finite and the created, and because they find in this process of analysis, comparison, and logical development many inconsistencies and inconceivabilities, they leap to the conclusion that the ultimate Reality is in every respect unknowable, and that those attributes of power, wisdom, love, righteousness, with which humanity, as the result of its experience and intuition, has invested the divine are all delusive; that, in short, we have no justification in assigning to the First Cause any attributes whatever. The agnostic thus turns his own inability to argue down correctly

from the infinite into an accusation of the impossibility of the theist's arguing up from the finite towards the infinite. Mathematics, however, show that arguments from the infinite to the finite are rarely, if ever, trustworthy, while arguments from the finite up to the infinite are often sound and valuable. Because the agnostic, by inverting the proper method of reasoning as regards the infinite, gets himself into trouble, does it at all follow that no valid results can be attained by the theist when he employs the right method?

In point of fact, however much men of science object to the use of the infinite, they themselves use it freely; in many departments they cannot proceed without it. In geometry the conceptions of the line, circle and sphere; in mathematics the passage from the axioms of uniform motion to other forms of motion; in algebra the calculus, the mightiest instrument of mathematical investigation,—all these require as indispensable the conception of the infinitely small, and reasoning upon it. Astronomy and geology, on the other hand, lead us to the correlative infinitude, the infinitely large. Especially do those who belong to the materialistic school, and scout most contemptuously the idea of any infinite when presented by theism, make without scruple the most confident assertions of the infinite in their own hypotheses. Strauss, Vogt, Buchner, Haeckel, each lays down, as fundamental principles of his system, the eternity of matter and the immortality of force. Even Herbert Spencer cannot get along without using the idea of the infinite. Though he has branded all ideas which

involve infinite self-existence as pseudo-ideas, and consequently condemned all forms of theism, pantheism, and materialism as inevitably involving such illegitimate conceptions, no sooner has he laid theology, as he imagines, in ruins, and swept off the débris, and gone about his own system of thought-building, than he puts in again the same old condemned corner-stone; he tells us that matter was uncreated and indestructible, and that force always persists in absolutely unchanged quantity,—ideas which necessarily involve infinite duration both in the past and the future. And, more than this, the principle of thought by which science extends its reasonings beyond the finite is just the same as that by which religion claims to know the character of the divine, viz., that what is true up to a limit is true at the limit.

But is not our knowledge confined to the relative? it will still be urged. Can we know God in Himself? Can we think of the Absolute without determining and conditioning Him? Can we think of the divine except in the colors of the thinking self? Doubtless we cannot. But this, again, is a condition of all our knowledge. We can know no one in himself, out of his relations to us. We know a friend only by the various manifestations of his personality, his looks, tones, actions. And these must come into some connection with ourself. We cannot know a grain of corn in its inmost nature, irrespective of its appearance to us. We know it only by the phenomena that it manifests, its shape, hardness, color, taste. Moreover, these manifestations must be manifestations to our special senses, our individual mind. What they

are or may be independent of our sensibility we can never know. Whatever perception we have, the perceiving subject is mingled with it, and a factor in the product, and that perception is such only as the nature of our faculties allows it to be. Without eyes we can know no color, without ears, no sound, and the range of colors, the gamut of sounds, is such only as the structure of those organs allows.

Now all this is true enough, and instead of this mystery of the absolute and this veil of the relative being death-sentences of faith, they are as innocent as any principle of knowledge that can be found. All that this famous difficulty amounts to saying is, that if we take away all that we can know of any object we cannot know what is left; and this self-evident law of all things applies also to God, that we cannot know Him more fully or know Him by any different way than we know all other things.

This, I say, is true enough. But about it has gathered a huge penumbra of notions that are not true, that do not follow. It does not follow, as is inferred, that because our knowledge is relative to us it is therefore deceiving. Why may not the relative be real and true? Is there anything that necessarily confines genuineness, actuality, or substantiality to that which does not come into relation with us? Why is all this to be attributed to that mental air-castle—"the thing in itself," or to the relations of things to other minds rather than to their relations to our minds? What reason have we for assuming reality to be that which cannot appear, or which appears to other minds or in other relations than to us? "If

reality is inscrutable, then," as Lewes asks, "by what right can we affirm it different from the manifested things?" I maintain that all things are known by their relations, for the simple reason that all things exist only in relations. I maintain that the relative, the phenomena that appear to us, are not mere phantasms, but parts of the great real. A man stubs his toe against the curbstone. The sensation within him is a real thing, the stone is a real thing. Doubtless it is something more than what he feels it to be; but it is at least this, in this relation. It may be thought of without reference to its present conditions, but it is just now, in reference to those conditions, precisely what he feels it to be. Remove it, and the whole equilibrium of the cosmos would feel the change.

And moreover the realities, so far from being made unknowable to us by our relations to them, are revealed through those relations. To infer that we can know only the relations, never the things; that we can become acquainted only with appearances, never with substances; and that we have no reason to believe in the existence, or to believe anything about the nature of things and substances, is another fallacy. Relations have no existence unless there are things to be related; and if the things are entirely unknown, their relations must be also unknown. Appearances are impossible unless there is something to appear. And moreover through the relations themselves comes a knowledge of the things related. In the very appearances we learn of the substances appearing. My desk, for example, manifests itself to my touch as

hard and smooth; to my eye as of a certain shape and color; to the ear, if it be vigorously struck, as possessed of a certain resonance. These phenomena and relations to my sensitive self, speak of something which has power to impress me with these sensations; they speak of something that abides, that I cannot banish by thinking it away—something that affects a photograph plate very much as it affects my eye; something that when I shut my eyes to it or go away from it, waits for my return in the very same group of appearances till I return. These qualities speak of some substantial unity in which they centre, some reality to which they belong, and whose nature, as it is in reference to me, is shown by them. Herbert Spencer arguing for our knowledge of matter, maintains that though we know only the relative reality yet that that stands in such a fixed relation to the absolute reality that knowledge of one is tantamount to knowledge of the other. "The conditioned effect standing in indissoluble relation with the unconditioned cause and equally persistent with it, so long as the conditions persist, is to the consciousness supplying those conditions equally real, . . . and for practical purposes is the same as the cause itself." This is true, and true for all phenomena, for all realities. And in accordance with this principle, I claim that so far from the ultimate Reality, the divine, being inscrutable, we have no mean knowledge of it. We have knowledge not only of its existence, but of its nature. We know it as we know matter or force, as we know a magnet, a rose, a bird,—by its action upon us, by its manifestations to our faculties, "by the per-

sistent impressions which are the persistent results of a persistent cause." God is in the manifestations of Himself which He presents in His created things, as well as in that mysterious essence behind the manifestations. God is in the known as well as in the unknown.

If the ultimate Reality be utterly unknowable, as Mr. Spencer says, then any manifestation of it would be impossible, or would be meaningless. The absolute Reality would be a blank to all intelligence. To make any predicate of it whatsoever would be illegitimate. Yet Mr. Spencer himself assigns attributes to the Unknowable. He speaks of it as *eternal*, *omnipresent*, as *active*, as a *power*, and as a *cause*. Professor Tyndall calls God, "the power that makes for righteousness, intellectual as well as ethical." Here certainly is a good deal asserted about the character as well as about the existence of the absolute Reality, and in terms, moreover, derived from conscious experience. By what reasoning process have these terms been attributed to the Supreme Existence? Nay, by what reasoning process has its Existence been known or affirmed? "By our mental obligation," to answer in words that Mr. Spencer himself has employed, "to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power." By that constitution of our minds by which thought cannot be prevented from passing behind appearance, and trying to conceive a cause behind. But surely if this reasoning process is good to show us so much of the divine, it is good to show us much more. Every phenomenon of the universe is a real and true manifestation of the

action and character of the supreme Cause. As the nature of oxygen, though tasteless to the tongue, odorless to the nose, invisible to the eye, not to be grasped by the hand, is yet known to us by the effects which it is still capable of, both mechanically and chemically, so can we know the God who is Himself unobservable by any sense, through His constant actions and effects in the world.

By studying these phenomena of the creation, then, we may learn the character of the Creator. The cosmos reveals that order which gives it its name. Steady laws in regular movement, in harmonious coordination carry on its manifold operations. Condensing nebula, whirling cyclone, swinging tides, all have their place and their rule. The Power from which this order is the outcome, we may then know as orderly.

Again, the cosmos manifests itself as a unity. To the first glance the world, indeed, seems a hurly-burly of contending powers, a conglomerate of a thousand different substances, laws, and existences. But as science, with its closer scrutiny examines it, the apparent discords melt away. The complex resolve themselves into combinations of the simple. The antagonisms reveal themselves as but efforts at stable equilibrium and coherences. Through the whole gamut of matter—yes, and of life, with all its numberless forms and grades—is discovered the harmonic note. Energies and laws converge to one focus. Forces correlate and transform themselves one into the other, till under the outward diversity we can recognize but a single ultimate power. All manifesta-

tions of the supreme thus resolving themselves into unity, can we not feel sure that the supreme Cause, however many modes of manifestation it may have, is itself one?

Again, let us survey the history of the world, the succession of living organisms, the path of human events. Is there not in these appearances another attribute of the ever-appearing clearly shown—the attribute of life? Nothing remains inert, but all is full of movement. Nothing remains stagnant, but is ever pushing forward, climbing up, unfolding. If sometimes there seems retrogression, it is but the backward curve of the spiral, to mount and enlarge still more. Species rise above species in an ascending hierarchy. The new age stands above every olden time. The process of the years brings with it widening to every power, more and more perfection to every form. Has this spontaneous activity and continual process of adjustment towards higher and higher levels, this unfolding evolution, or in plain terms, growth, (the grand discovery of modern science) nothing to tell us of the nature of the power that is behind it? Does it not, in fact, indicate at the heart of this self-moving universe, that which alone can move itself, that which alone can grow, namely a *Life*, the vital energy of the first cause?

Moreover, this order and progress in the universe, if we fully understand it, is arranged according to intellectual conceptions, exhibits systematic plans and purposes. Means combine to promote ends. The thoughts of the mathematicians are reproduced in the laws of plant and planet. All parts and processes move towards the fulfilment of one grand design, a

greater and greater perfection. The developing process, as it runs up from the insensate to the sensitive, from the instinctive to the rational, causes more and more intelligence to shine forth in the world. If mind in unconscious nature be denied, no one can deny its manifestation in the conscious parts of nature, animal and human mind. And this manifested intelligence permeating the world, this mind blossoming forth from the central life, must bespeak (on the lowest physical view of its origin) that central life as also intelligent.

Again, in the harmonious lines and forms of nature, blushing blossom and majestic mountain-mass, glowing sunbeam and checkered leaf-shade, we see a beauty that supplies an exquisite gratification. In the fruit and grain prepared in summer for our winter food, in the treasures of metal and fuel and precious stones built and stored for us in the bowels of the earth, in the million provisions for the comfort and happiness of every creature, in all these admirable adaptations that disclose themselves most exquisitely to those who examine most carefully, there is shown the grand sweep of the universe towards the good, the beneficent. Even in the bitter we find the sweet hidden; through struggle and sorrow we are led to higher success. By bane and by bruise we are conducted to the abiding blessedness. Can we behold all these tokens of blessedness and love, and rationally say that they tell us of no benevolence, that they suggest no love in that Being whose power goeth forth so benignantly in space and time?

Once more, survey those visible things that especially

manifest the invisible. Observe the moral, and spiritual elements of the world, the instincts of the right, the authority of moral law. Watch the invincible tide that sweeps towards justice, the remorse that chastises the guilty, the serene peace that rewards the pure-hearted. Consider the aspirations of the holy, the grand visions of the seer, the saint's consciousness of divine communion. The mother counts her own life nothing if she may save her babe. The patriot makes way for liberty over his spear-pierced body. The martyr goes unwaveringly to the stake rather than be disloyal to truth. These grand illustrations of the nobleness of humanity which age to age renews, their elements lying latent in every soul, are not they facts of the cosmic evolution? Are not they manifestations of the ultimate Reality as truly as any other phenomena? Are they not as rightly significant of its nature? Yes. As the picture shows the artist's sense of beauty, as the symphony exhibits the composer's musical taste and capacity, as the judge's administration of justice discloses his discernment of right and faithfulness to it, and as the father's self-sacrifice reveals his paternal love, so through the rectitude, justice, love, faithfulness, and holiness manifested in mankind's noblest representatives do we know in the Creator of man a rectitude, justice, love, and holiness bright enough to give the moral images, which, even but dimly reflected on the mirror of human nature, so glorify it. Not that these qualities in us adequately represent the attributes of the divine, but rather that on their lower level they correspond to them, they shadow forth something of the brighter reality. That in the Su-

preme there must be an intelligence at least as wise as our highest wisdom, a goodness at least as much and as good as our best, a real equal to our highest ideal and our loftiest aspiration—this is the necessary inference from the manifestation of those qualities in us.

Here, then, by those very methods of observation, generalization, and inductive inference by which physical science is built up, we can know something, not merely of the existence, but of the nature and attributes of the ultimate Reality, manifested in the universe. But if science may not admit this sketch of the divine character as affording any absolute or complete knowledge of it, it must at least logically admit it as sufficient relative knowledge, good as far as it goes, good as its own knowledge of the force and matter and motion that it talks so confidently of; good as these are for "good-working hypotheses"; nay, as the only hypotheses that will work.

The attributes with which theologians have usually invested the divine—such as infinity, eternity, omniscience, flawless holiness and absolute perfection and independence, are indeed, more or less unpicturable and unverifiable and quite metaphysical.

It is well to admit this.

Suppose then we should relinquish any claim to a knowledge of them, and thus avoid all the impossibilities of knowing God, founded upon them, of which the agnostic makes so much. Suppose we claim only for the God of our worship a range as wide as the known universe, a duration no more vast than the oldest star-dust, a force as subtle merely as the cosmic energies, a manifested presence simply as

grand, mysterious, noble, and beneficent as the universal life in which we live and move and have our being,—surely, we have still left a Being divine enough to demand our most reverent worship. I am not concerned to vindicate against the doubter any of the metaphysical attributes which he claims prevent us from knowing God or believing in Him. If they hold him back from belief in God, I would say to him, "Let them go." We have still left within our knowledge and before our eyes the witness of a power and an intelligence enough, and vastly more than enough, to thrill us with awe, to quicken us to praise, and to command us, if we would win any success or true blessedness, to conform our will to that mightier will that governs all.

That is the short and simple answer to these metaphysical quandaries of the agnostics which are so often regarded as insuperable barriers to faith in the divine. We not only can know a Being worthy of our worship, cause of all that comes into existence, a Being of dimensions and duration to which we can put no bounds; but we do know such a Being. The agnostic knows Him already just as much as any one else. Only he calls that Being "Nature," not God, and speaks of it as if it were an independent power.

But seriously to regard nature and God as two separate powers or to think of the forces of the world as something independent of God is to abandon monotheism and go back to polytheism. It is not only poor theology, but poor science and poor philosophy. When men separate God from the forces that are His own energies, from the laws which are His own habits

of action, and from the material manifestation which is His own body, and then try to prove His existence, no wonder they hunt from room to room of the boundless mansion of earth and sky, and can find no separate God visible within the field of their telescope.

But let us begin by recognizing space as His stature, eternity as His life, and each vibrating stream of light and heat that bridges the interstellar spaces as the throbbing pulses of the cosmic organism; then we find that that divine face, as Browning says,

> "Far from vanish, rather grows,
> Or decomposes but to recompose,
> Become my universe that feels and grows."

The question, then, becomes much simplified. The superhuman power, practically eternal and infinite, is before our eyes, besetting us on every hand. As Herbert Spencer, in the name of science, says, "Amid the mysteries that remain the more mysterious the more they are thought of, there will remain (to the scientist) the one absolute certainty that he is ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed."

So much is admitted to-day by modern science. The question is narrowed down to the alternative, Is this eternal power that fills all space an inanimate and unconscious power or a living and a conscious power?

Now to this question the agnostic again interposes, "It is impossible to know." Mr. Ingersoll recommends to us the answer of the Indian to the missionary who was urging upon him the Christian faith. The Indian took a stick and made a little circle in the

sand, and said, "That is what Indian knows." Then he made a larger circle round that, and said: "That is what white man knows. But out here, outside of the circle, Indian knows just as much as white man."

That was undoubtedly a very clever stroke,—for an Indian. But for a white man to adopt it as conclusive, as Mr. Ingersoll does, shows a surprising ignorance of what the white man of this nineteenth century has accomplished. It is the glorious victory of modern science to have demolished such limitations on its knowledge. The Indian's knowledge covers the small valley in which he lives. The white man's extends not only to the larger state or hemisphere where he has traveled, but to provinces where he has never been, where no man has ever been. No man has ever seen the north pole or the other side of the moon; yet we are as practically certain of their existence and character as if we had been there. We have discovered gases that no sense has directly observed, rays of the spectrum invisible to the eye, suns that no telescope has seen, yet whose courses and times of revolution and velocity through the sky the astronomer has carefully noted, calculated and verified. And in these unobserved suns of the stellar depths the man of science feels certain that the laws of heat, light, chemic affinity, mathematics, and geometry, are the same as here. Below, in the smallest germ, science finds force, law, growth, and rationality. Above, in the grandest and most distant solar systems, force, law, growth, and rationality again are manifested. And in whatever still undiscovered galaxies may lie trillions of leagues beyond, whose existence is not yet

either known or suspected, the same principles, we feel certain, will still rule there as here. As to that which it is impossible for us ever to know, we can of course say nothing. That, however, can in nothing affect or concern us. But that which, although it is as yet unknown, is conceivably knowable, must be recognized, by virtue of that knowability, as owning the dominion of those principles by which alone things are knowable.

Whatever, then, lies outside the circle of our absolute knowledge does not interfere with the practical certainties of theistic faith. The reason is that this modern science of the white man of the nineteenth century has found out that the whole universe is woven out of the same material and spiritual web. The domain of knowledge—not merely present knowledge, but potential knowledge—is one coherent with itself and with what is already known. The cosmos is a unity, from end to end. The molecules of hydrogen and sodium in these double suns that the spectroscope informs us of, though the telescope cannot separate them, vibrate in unison with the sodium flames of our own earth. The same laws of gravitation that draw the falling penny that you toss up in the air back to the ground, wheel the farthest galaxies around their hidden astronomic centres, and the youngest, mistiest nebula of the skies is proceeding on the same path of evolution by which our own planet has ripened to its present condition. The various stages and realms of nature are not exclusive of one another, but inclusive, enclosing one another like the nest of concentric shells which make up a

conjurer's ball. The vegetable kingdom includes the inorganic; the animal kingdom includes the vegetable; the human includes the animal and all below it. And so the divine, we may feel sure, however higher and grander than the human, will not be wanting in what forms the glory of man.

Of course, we cannot wholly know God's nature; but as little can we know ourselves, and yet be wholly ignorant of Him. The divine attributes are loftier and more numerous than the human. But, by the law we have just stated, they are not alien and without relation to the human, but inclusive of the human. Whatever higher qualities God has, He is at least as wise, at least as just and good, as the human children He has brought into being; and, even as to that higher and mysterious centre of Divinity which is ever to remain a mystery, we may at least feel sure of this, —that the *direction* in which it lies is the direction of man's own highest powers, not that of the inferior and more meagre qualities of dead matter.

This is the simple course of reasoning by which the religious thinkers of to-day feel sure that the grand universe about them is no wheel-work of unconscious machinery, but the organism of a boundless Life and superior Reason. The universe is permeated with order. All its forces and laws are unitary. It is ever climbing forward, pushing upward, growing and unfolding.

This order and growth proceed according to ideal laws and conceptions, exhibit intelligible plans and purposes. The laws of the arrangement of the leaves on the stem and of the planets wheeling about their

solar centres conform to one and the same mathematical formula. The grand current of the universe is ever towards the righteous and the beneficent. The history of man exhibits a steady moral progress. The course of evolution progressively exalts conscious personality and strengthens the foundations of justice, suppresses the lower and carnal, and refines, diffuses, and enthrones in power the spiritual.

How do these qualities thus steadily emerge more and more in nature and man, unless they exist in their cause? We can have no appearance unless there is something to appear. No blossom is evolved unless there is a seed,—a cause from which it is evolved. These phenomena of nature and man manifest, then, the action and character of the supreme Cause. At the heart of this self-moving, growing universe, there must be that as has been already suggested, which alone can initiate motion, can grow,—namely, a Life; a life vast and all-powerful enough to produce what we see that it does produce. And this universal Life cannot work with such wondrous intelligence, justice, and beneficence, it cannot be imagined stirring us to love and righteousness as it does, unless there were in it an intelligence, rectitude, and loving kindness equal to our own loftiest aspirations. Surely, when we feel ourselves commanded with such an unconditional imperative to do our duty and to love our neighbor that even life itself must be sacrificed to obey it, we cannot believe that it is from any being himself loveless or from any force or power itself immoral and insensate that we should have been charged with such insistent duties.

The facts of the world, then, seem plainly to point to intelligence and benevolence, so high and wide that we can fix no bounds to them, as characterizing the supreme source and life of the world.

But here the agnostic interposes with fresh difficulties. If God be good, how comes it that justice is so often thwarted, that innocence is not a perfect shield, that famines like that of India to-day are permitted to occur?

In the problem of evil we have a serious difficulty, —the oldest and gravest difficulty to belief in a God worthy of our worship. But, while it is a difficulty, the difficulties on the *other* side, in rejecting the idea of any divine causation or any beneficent purpose, are far greater. If the source from which humanity springs be but dead mechanism, destitute of goodness, whence came this human pity? Mr. Ingersoll's own indignant protest against such a doctrine as that of eternal hell or against the unmerited sufferings of the innocent,—this and every other manifestation of human compassion and indignation against wrong, such as our skeptics and agnostics are so often found expressing, are the strongest presumption of the divine goodness and righteousness. Can God have put this instinct of the lawful desert of virtue, of the injustice of purposeless, unmerited suffering, into His children's hearts, and no similar feeling be in His own heart? Does the agnostic really fancy that in himself there is a tenderness of soul superior to that of his Creator? Or, if he insist still in arguing on the materialistic basis, does he really believe that he has a sense of justice and impulse of good will beyond all that this

great universe that moulded and cradled him possesses, so that, if the universe could but wake up to consciousness for a moment, it would be astonished at the new and superior attributes that this human pygmy has attained to? That would, indeed, be most colossal conceit. But, if we are not to puff ourselves out with such arrogance, then we must trust that there is some satisfactory explanation to this problem of evil, dark as it seems,—an explanation entirely consistent with God's goodness.

And we can, in fact, see no little way into the enigma. Evil is only incidental, the scaffolding, shavings, and rubbish, as it were, of nature's building, all to be removed or utilized later on. No nerve is made on purpose to ache. The pain is but the danger-signal, to warn against more serious injuries. Disease, decay, and death are the accompaniment of laws that promote or guard life,—the autumn dropping of the leaves on the great cosmic tree, to prepare for the new growth and beauty of a more glorious spring-time. Man's passions, though the source of so large a part of his miseries, are yet the motor powers of all his social and moral progress, the channel of life, the physical basis of love and of all that is most precious in existence.

Another great part of so-called evil is relative. Yesterday it was a good eagerly grasped. To all those below us in the social scale it is still a coveted boon. To the infinite vision, perhaps, that hardship which it works for us is but a blessing in disguise, a spur to drive us on to a still higher good. Again, take out of the world all the evil that is due to human

agency, and how large a part would be gone! But all this is plainly incidental to a greater good,—to our moral freedom and our ability to learn from experience and be trained up in moral and spiritual excellence. Mr. Ingersoll himself has said, "If man could not suffer, the words 'right' and 'wrong' would never have been spoken." Is the insentient creature, then, better than the moral man? Not so. The development of man's moral character, the refining of his spiritual personality, the development of pity and sympathy, virtue and self-sacrifice, would all have been impossible in a world where evil was unknown. Would that have been a better world than this? I believe it would have been a worse world,—certainly, a far inferior world to this. Its peace would have been the peace of death. The development of the human soul is worth more than all the pain it costs, worth all the mistakes and sins through which it is reached. It is only in the furnace of affliction that the purest gold of character is refined. And no one who has ever borne suffering aright, who has understood its purpose as a process of spiritual purification and perfection, has complained that it was incompatible with God's love to His children. To the materialist who says "Death ends all," it may seem excessive and useless. But where there is faith in a future life for which this is the training school, where there is believed to be an eternity of life in which God can make up to each soul for all it has suffered, and bring all this ooze and mud of earth to its purposed blossoming in a heavenly clime, there this cloud of evil turns out its silver lining before the eye; and we

rejoice to see how "from seeming evil" God is ever "educing good, and, better yet again, in infinite progression."

The great poet of English idealism has well spoken of "truths that wake to perish never."

Amongst these eternal possessions of the human heart the foremost of all is the faith in the Divine Existence. Religion need have no real fear that that grand thought shall suffer any permanent eclipse. It is the light of all our seeing; and they who think they deny Him but thrust aside some imperfect conception of Him, only to vindicate the Divine essence under some other guise.

"I'm an atheist, thank God!" cried a blundering boaster of his irreligion. And most denials of Deity testify in the very same breath to a like unconscious faith in the Inevitable One. If we cannot grasp Him, it is because He clasps us. If we cannot see Him, it is because He is the all-enveloping medium of mortal vision. If we fancy our prayers needless, it is because He has loved and blessed us already too much beyond our deserts. And in the very sigh of the weary soul that cannot find Him, He returns to assure us that we cannot lose Him, even if we would.

It is true that all our inductions from observation, all the generalizations and inferences that nature authorizes, still fall short of giving us the attributes and the measure of the truly divine.

We may reach by such scientific methods, to belief in a cosmic being who is indefinitely immense, but not infinite; inconceivably enduring, but not eternal; wonderfully wise, but not omniscient; pure

as our purest ideal, but not absolutely perfect; vastly superhuman, but not supernatural; grand and majestic, indeed, but still limited and finite. For, as we discern this Being only by His manifestations in the universe, we have no right to attribute to Him anything beyond the measure experienced in that universe; and nowhere in the actual universe can we discern that which is absolutely unlimited, absolutely exempt from liability to imperfection. What warrant, then, have we for that infinitude, eternity, omniscience, and perfection that constitute the really divine attributes of God?

Yes, I admit that the physical universe manifests nowhere these highest attributes of the divine. The knowledge of them is not to be drawn from the contemplation of nature. These are given, not by observation or logical inference, but by intuition and spiritual suggestion, the more direct vision of the soul that sees beyond the boundary of actual or possible experience into the realm of pure truth. It is the straighter entrance into the mind, and the clear recognition by consciousness of that revealing light which God imparts to humanity. The warrant of the validity of these intuitions is the same that warrants the lower intuitions on which science is based, viz., their irrepressible existence, "their persistency in consciousness"; "the inexplicability of their arising or continuing in our belief, unless corresponding to realities" (to use Spencer's criterion); "the complete satisfaction which is thus given to the needs of the intellect" (to use Tyndall's test). If our ultimate and necessary belief in the persistence of force, the inde-

structibility of matter, and the uniformity of nature be good proof of these basic laws of science (and remember: they are the only proof there is of them); if the inexpugnable consciousness of the existence of an ultimate reality behind appearance establish that grand truth (as Herbert Spencer tells us it does, and founds his whole system of evolution on it); if the fulfilment of the desire of the reason which the luminiferous ether gives should be accepted as good evidence for its reality (as Professor Tyndall tells the world it should); why is not the same kind of proof valid evidence for these spiritual truths, these higher attributes of the divine nature? Certainly, no one who accepts the current theories or the established principles of science can rightly object to the reasoning.

And if by the rigid methods of induction, starting from the widest observation and proceeding by the most rigorous logic, we can lay the scientific foundations of religion in the existence of a Being inconceivably immense and enduring, grand as the universe, beneficent and pure as our highest ideal, wise and majestic beyond all standards of human wisdom or material majesty, then we have all that is needed for humanity's worshipful instincts; and we may properly expand this divine ideal in the glow of imagination to that infinite and absolute plenitude of eternal perfection that is required for the complete satisfaction alike of the adoring heart and the thinking reason.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCIENTIFIC VALIDITY OF OUR RELIGIOUS INSTINCTS.

In the history of religion there is nothing more astonishing, both to its friends and its foes, than the ineffectiveness of the heaviest argumentative bombardments in driving out faith in spiritual things from the stronghold of popular belief. When the agnostic peruses some new critique of the theistic argument or the latest examination of the belief in a future life, he throws his hat in the air in exultation, confident that the superstition cannot survive such another fatal exposure, and timid Christians themselves turn pale with apprehension of the coming downfall of the church. But when, the nine days' wonder over, the new dialectical or scientific cannonade has passed by, the flag of Christian trust and hope is seen floating as jubilantly as ever over the ancient walls. The wise come to a recognition of the truth that it was not chiefly by logical or scientific scaling-ladders that man has mounted to the heights of religious conviction, and therefore that it avails little to pull them away.

That from which religion ever wells up afresh from age to age is the spiritual capacity of humanity, sensitive to the subtile touches of the unseen world and the indwelling divine life. The laws of thought, within whose narrow circle logic is confined, make it

difficult, if not impossible, to prove satisfactorily not a few of the propositions of theism. Nevertheless the forces of feeling and the tides of life, which are ever pressing us over the logical boundary-lines towards the Infinite, keep the sacred beliefs of religion perennially alive. Against all the subtilties of the dialecticians, in the face of all the discoveries of the scientists, the heart makes its undying protests. However little, in strictness of logic, we may be able to prove, the faiths of our higher nature remain with us, and we say, with England's poet laureate:

"I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries; not in vain
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with death;

"Not only cunning casts in clay;
Let science prove we are, and then
What matters science unto men?
At least to me, I would not stay.

"Let him the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape;
But I was born to other things."

Such is the flat defiance of the heart to the worst that logical analysis or physical investigation can do.

Now, to the scientific man this seems sheer sentimentalism. In his opinion we have no business (the religious man no more than any one else) to introduce the agitations of the emotions to disturb the conclusions of the intellect. "Every one," says Büchner, "may, of course, have convictions of the heart; but to mix them up with philosophical questions is unscien-

tific." The only question that the scientific world will admit as pertinent, in reference to the acceptance of a theory, is the question of its truth or falsehood. If a theory accords with reason or experience, then it is true and is to be accepted. If it does not so accord, then it is not true, and is to be rejected. The question of its pleasantness or unpleasantness to one's tastes, prepossessions, or instincts is not to be considered for a moment.

Now, to this demand for the pure truth, the simple fact, I entirely assent, and I say that religion also must assent. Truth is her sovereign, quite as much as that of science. It is "they that are of the truth," said Christ, that "hear my voice." The true Christian disciple is known by his allegiance to the genuine and the real, by the earnestness with which he seeks to conform his thought and faith to the actualities of the world. For a people that calls itself Christian to make pleasant falsities the objects of its worship, and "make-believe" the staple of its religion, would be the saddest spectacle the sun anywhere could shine upon. Truth, however distasteful, is better than the sweet poison of delusion.

I accept truth, then, *i. e.*, the evidence of the facts, as the one thing which should determine our faiths. But does this require that we should straightway dismiss all the instincts of the heart as incompetent to testify at all in religious things, and admit to the judicial balances only stone fossils and iced syllogisms? Grant that truth is the one decisive thing, and the question arises at once: What is truth, and how can you determine it? The moment that you advance to

the determination of this question: "What is truth?" you must recognize that there are many questions in which the accord or the discord of the theory with our native constitution is a most weighty consideration in determining what truth is.

Facts are, indeed, what we must follow; but lumps of matter and vibratory motions, pressed plants and ticketed beetles are not the only facts in existence. The inextinguishable longings of the human soul, from which religions spring, are also facts, and as good testimonies and signs in determining truth as bug or polyp is. Even in relation to a spider or a bee, statements in regard to their form, weight, color, and other material characteristics are not the only scientific facts of importance. The naturalist must record, as matter of equal or greater gravity, their mental qualities, the tastes of the one for insect prey, of the other for honey; the instinct of the one to spin its webs, of the other to build and stock its cells; the varied impulses that move each in their different ways of providing for the perpetuation of their respective species.

So, in regard to man, a knowledge of his immaterial characteristics is still more essential to a full scientific knowledge of him than a knowledge of his material qualities. His desires and longings; those higher impulses that move him to acts which are incomprehensible, if his being is interpreted as a purely material one; those universal intuitions which are the very condition of observation and the justification of all reasoning, yet which pass quite beyond the strict boundaries of either logic or empiricism, these are the

most important of all facts about him. And not only are they facts, but they are facts that speak of more than the character of their possessor. They are facts that disclose also the nature of the world in which he lives, and the nature of the beings with whom he is connected.

Recall for a moment a few analogies. The building propensity which urges the tamed beaver, kept in a house, to strive continually to construct dams, would assure us, (did we never directly observe the fact), of the flowing stream, which is the creature's native haunt. The groping of the new-born lamb for the mother's dugs speaks plainly of the food there, meet for the satisfaction of its craving. The sexual appetite implies the answering sex; and the bird's nest-building and brooding instinct is prophetic of the coming generation, and correspondent to its needs. Every part in nature, having been moulded by the whole, speaks of that whole, and bids us believe that whatever is needed as its complement exists somewhere and somehow. If no telescope had yet revealed Neptune, nevertheless, the need of that additional planet to explain the perturbations of Uranus would assure astronomers of its existence. When an Agassiz discovers, on the summit of some mountain, thousands of miles from the sea, the remains of creatures with gills and fins and swimming-bladder, he is sure of the existence in that region, at some past period, of the lake or sea to whose aquatic environment these organs are correlated. Why so? Simply because these creatures needed this watery element for the use of the organs with which we see them endowed.

This is the customary method of scientific reasoning, a guiding principle of discovery in nature, viz., that nowhere in the world do we find a permanent general need in a living species unless there exists some supply adjusted to it. There is not a naturalist who thinks of disputing this, or who, if he did, could make a step of progress in his knowledge of ancient times.

Now, this same law holds in the realm of human existence. Whatever needs man's soul feels, whatever impulses are native to his spirit, whatever insights his spiritual vision can attain to, give evidence as to the real nature of the world in which he was developed and the real agency of the operations going on about him, equally significant and valid as the laws which the senses indicate or to which the reason testifies.

But just here the scientific objector would doubtless interpose, and ask us if we are acquainted with the epoch-making work of Mr. Darwin and Mr. Spencer, and if we think that, in view of their discoveries, this argument still has force. Mr. Darwin and Mr. Spencer, our scientific friends assure us, have shown conclusively that instinct and intuition are mere products of multitudinous ancestral experiences, accumulated and fused into these seemingly different things by the combined action of habit, association of ideas, and heredity. Though in the individual they may seem innate, in the race they are not so, but are results of its experience; they are developments of low, gross impulses, and therefore are not worthy to be taken as witnesses to the fundamental truths of religion.

Suppose we grant this origin of our cravings, instincts, and intuitions. Let our highest intuitions

and aspirations, all the most delicate forms of the conscious life of to-day, be regarded as but the accumulated principal and interest of all that has been felt or known by every organism in the ascending line, from the primordial life-cell up to man. Grant all this, and what is the consequence? Does it overthrow the validity of our instinctive feelings and intuitive ideas; or, rather, does it not solidly establish them?

For what are the principles ruling in this development of the soul? First and foremost, the principle of adjustment of the inner to the outer, of the mental to the material. The very definition of life given by Herbert Spencer is, "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." We distinguish between a live object and a dead one, Spencer points out, by noticing whether a change in its conditions will be followed by a change in the object itself. Stir it with a stick, or shout at it, and its immobility or its action tells us whether it is inanimate or animate. In the living organism, not only is there always some response to the outside world and its events, but there is a fitting response. The ruminating organs correspond to a flora of herbs and grass. The stinging contractile power of a polyp's tentacles corresponds, says Spencer, to the sensitiveness and strength of the creatures serving it for prey. According to the need for more varied and more rapid adjustment of the internal relations to the outer relations, the inward organs are more and more complicated and efficient. The degree of life varies as the degree of correspondence, from the seaweed in its simple environment up to infinitely complex man, in

his infinitely varied circumstances. Wherever there is a gap between the inner and the outer relations, there the organism modifies itself to fit the circumstances, and to close up the gap. The touch of nature upon the living creature, and the response of life to that physical impress, moulds the two into harmony. The fur-clad northern animal sheds its fur in the south. The creature from a warm climate, thinly clad or naked, develops, in a colder zone, a warmer clothing. The greyhound, brought to the rarefied air of the Mexican table-land, unable in the first generation to exert itself as usual without panting and exhaustion, in the second generation unfolds a new breathing capacity, and regains the speed, characteristic of the species. Spencer's and Darwin's works form a treasury of illustrations of this continual adjustment of the organism to its environment. It is the very condition of the creature's existence, says Mr. Darwin, that he shall exactly fit himself to the world about him. Death to his species, in the struggle for existence, is the sure penalty for not thus fitting himself to the facts of the world. He cannot carry any load of useless organ or faculty, or the extra weight will cause him to lose the race. As soon as an organ is no longer of use, it begins to shrivel and tends to degeneration and extinction. Mr. Darwin challenged the production of an instance where any organ, absolutely without use in the struggle for life, continued for any length of time to be fully developed.

Such, then, is the first great principle that governs in the evolution of life, viz., that life is constantly and necessarily correspondent to the universe without.

Now, apply this to the question of religion, and what is its bearing? Only a new and stronger confirmation of our position, that the innate idea bespeaks an objective reality corresponding to it. The persistent inward state, the constant moral and spiritual needs of man, his ever-renewed beliefs (whatever they are), inform us of the persistent outward fact to which they are correlated. For did the external reality not exist, the inward adjustment never would have arisen. Or, if by some chance it had come into existence, then, having no correspondent object to sustain, renew, and keep it true, it must, under the influence of the equilibrating tendencies, either pass away or shift its form, until it reached a state of natural equilibrium with its environment.

Or, take the other great principle of the development theory, that of descent or heredity. Suppose, as this theory asks us to believe, that our religious intuitions and our moral sense are only refinements of our social instincts; and that these are but modifications of lower brute impulses; and these, again, have been derived and transformed, somehow, out of the attractions, repulsions, and other activities common to all matter and force. Nay, we will suppose the truth even of Professor Huxley's theory, that we are really only automata, that our feelings, thoughts, and aspirations are necessary results of the sum of motions of matter and impulses of force in the midst of which they arise. We will look upon that which we call the soul as formed gradually from the necessary interaction of nature's energies; not as an existence of a different kind and substance, but only a subtler product of the

cosmic forces, risen thus to consciousness. What follows, then? Is the logical result not this, that if we inherit from the material world itself, its laws must be registered not only in our bodies but in our minds? Our consciousness, on this theory, is but the liberation of the dumb life and reason of the cosmos. The laws of the mind are its laws, precisely because they were beforehand the laws of that greater whole, nature, of which mind is but a more specialized part. A constant association in the heart's instincts and wants implies a constant association in the outer world.

The logical connection is a necessary one. For on this automaton theory of the mind no free-will can disturb the necessary and proper conclusion. The general laws of the mind, the universal beliefs of man, whatever they are, must result from the primitive facts of the universe, with as little chance of error as in the calculations of a calculating machine from the data with which it starts.

If, then, this human sensibility of ours, the first conscious expression of the hidden life forces of the universe, should shrink from such an idea as that of a personal God, and turn instinctively to views such as are offered us by the materialists, then, I admit, we ought to reject religion as false and accept atheism as true. But if, on the contrary, this inner force of nature, when liberated and expressed in the consciousness of humanity, with one general voice should be found confessing its natural belief in a creative mind; if, in its heart of hearts, it feels daily the need for such an object of worship and trust, and recoils with an unconquerable aversion from every godless theory,

then we have, in such testimony of the heart, sound logical proof of the facts to which these instincts of the heart correspond. They testify to the existence, as facts in the encircling universe, of those grand realities which, by iterated and reiterated impressions on the plastic organization of man, have stamped upon it these ineffaceable ideas. If the thought of infinity is indispensable in the ideal world, then it is an essential element in the real world. If we feel universally a power within ourselves, urging us to righteousness, then we know there is a power, not ourselves, working for that same righteousness.

Do we find faith in a perfect wisdom impressed on the sensitive tablets of our souls? Then there is implied, in that grand cosmic die that formed the impress, an equally infallible intelligence. Do we find, again, within the evolved microcosm, man, an insatiable hunger for a fuller love and an imperative need of a more helpful sympathy than man can give? Then we may be sure that without, in the macrocosm that evolved the human miniature, there is the divine affection corresponding thereto.

To ask, then, in regard to any theory proposed for our acceptance, whether or not it is in harmony with our natural instincts, is not an illogical sentimentalism, but a consideration of real weight in deciding whether or not it is to be accepted as true. The instincts of the heart, the intuitions of the mind, the aversions and longings of the soul, afford indications, not to be overlooked by any careful reasoner, as to the great realities in the cosmos which have shaped and moulded them. The latest scientific theories, instead of invalidating

such testimony, approve its competency. Let us, then, turn to human nature, and see what its testimony really is.

Is human nature adapted to atheism or to theism? Do materialistic theories or religious convictions best satisfy the human heart? These questions need but a brief consideration, so preponderantly do the facts all lie on one side. The whole history of humanity testifies to its religious tendencies and adaptations, and the violence to its highest instincts which every anti-religious system offers. In every human soul there is a thirst for something above all that the senses can give. There is an attraction to the infinite and perfect, and a groping after the sight and knowledge of it. The dimmest shadows of this Infinite Being fill man with awe and reverence. Impelled by sacred impulses, often scarcely understood, but still urging him on, man bows in worship to the holy mystery. As the schoolhouse exhibits man's desire for knowledge and the court-house his sense of justice, so the edifice of prayer and praise, holiest structure in every land, witnesses to the religious instinct in man. It matters not what different forms these may have, the stone circle of the Druid or the Pagoda of China, the mosque of Islam or the cathedral of Christianity; they all give testimony to the same worshipping instinct.

It will be objected, perhaps, that this religious wave is but a mere product of superstition, arising from ignorance of the laws of nature, and fear engendered by them.

If it be a superstition, it is one shared by the most enlightened philosophers and men of science. A

Bacon, a Leibnitz, a Pascal, a Locke, each has been its champion. A Herschel, a Newton, a Liebig, an Agassiz, a Faraday, each has owned its sway. It is the testimony of Professor Maudsley, a man by no means prejudiced in favor of religion, that "there is hardly one, if, indeed, there be even one, eminent inquirer who has denied the existence of God, while there is notably more than one who has evinced a childlike simplicity of faith."

There are, of course, some individuals and probably in the lowest ranks of humanity there may be one or two whole tribes (although the latest investigations tend to disprove this), without any trace of the religious sentiment. So there are men who are color blind. So there are tribes who cannot count above ten, or discern the simplest musical discords or concords. But this does not prove the non-existence of color, harmonies of sound, or distinctions of number. It shows only in these men the undeveloped state of their natures and faculties. Neither do the few exceptions to the grand hymn of praise and prayer, lifted by man to God, disprove at all the native adaptation of man to religion, and his need of it. The worst unbelievers have yet had their beliefs. Accepted forms of theologic statements have been rudely uprooted by them, but the irrepressible religious sense has blossomed in each with some new faith of the man's own.

The Jew who was excommunicated in Holland as the most negative of infidels was but so "intoxicated with God," as wiser minds afterwards saw, that he could walk in no narrow ecclesiastical path and see the Divine under no one nor threefold form. The represent-

ative scoffer of the eighteenth century, leader and mouthpiece of the disbelief of the French Revolution, built at his home in Ferney a chapel with the inscription; "Deo erexit Voltaire." The anathematized Tom Paine begins that "Age of Reason" which has been called a very Gospel of Unbelief, with this outspoken creed: "I believe in one God and no more and I look for happiness beyond this life."

Auguste Comte reasoned out a grand scheme which he called The Positive Philosophy, recognizing only phenomena, their coexistence and succession, and ruling out of court the very existence of God or the soul as the idle fancies of the world's childhood. But when he had finished it,—lo! one day he met a woman who awoke the heart slumbering within him. His beloved Clotilde revealed to him a law higher than self-interest, the law of love and worship; and he had to graft on to his system such sort of religion as was still possible after the immortal and the infinite had been ruled out. A makeshift Deity was improvised out of "Collective Humanity," and two hours a day, divided into three private services were to be spent in the adoration of this "Grand Being," under the form of a mother with her child in her arms. The image of the fair idol, dress, posture, everything, was to be brought distinctly to mind, and the whole soul was to be prostrated in her honor.

With such chaff will the spirit of man seek to satisfy its spiritual hunger when legitimate food is denied it!

Suppose that we knew two young men, starting out on the career of life, in the flush of youthful energy.

One of them has a clear, strong faith in the immortal soul within him and the all wise and all holy God above, and has determined to live as these beliefs dictate to him that he should live. The other is destitute entirely of religious faith and has made up his mind, also, to act in accordance with his Atheistic opinions.

Of which would any one have the brightest expectations? Which life, by its usefulness, its contentedness, its integrity and nobility would show itself in conformity with the laws and forces of nature?

In such a situation, is there any uncertainty as to the verdict?

Suppose a statesman, founding a new state, should take as its foundation stones, principles like these: "No belief in God or a future state is to be tolerated under this government; no worship of any superhuman being is to be allowed; all efforts at spiritual perfection, or the gratification of the religious sentiments, are to be as far as possible suppressed; men must remember that they are but more-developed brutes, and each must look out for his own gratification and the furtherance of his self-interest." Who would be wild enough to expect to make a nation live and prosper on such a basis? As Robespierre told the French Jacobins with reference to this very point: "If there were no God in existence, it would be necessary to the national well-being to invent one."

Or take but a few of the common test experiences of life. When the sobbing wife looks upon the grave of the beloved partner of her life; when the young man is sore beset by the seductions of unlawful passion; when the martyr to truth sees the blazing pyre

staring him in the face, unless he will forswear his honest convictions—which is it that in such crises best meets the needs of the heart? Which is it that responds to any man's sense of fitness or justice? To know that this world is the kingdom of an Almighty God, whose attributes are those of wisdom, love, and holiness, a God who will conquer finally all evil, help the struggling, and reward the upright, if not here, then in a more blessed hereafter; or, on the other hand, to believe that "the universe is simply an endless coil of antecedents and consequents, unwinding from the drum of time by unchangeable law; a monstrous engine of matter and force, grinding on remorselessly, caring not whom it kills, utterly unguided, unheeding, unknowing"? Can any one doubt which of these answers alone corresponds to the native instincts of man? Can any reasonable mind be uncertain as to which answer is adjusted to the characteristic features of humanity, which have been impressed on the heart of man by the grand seal of nature?

Some half century ago a German writer published a piece of verse which began in this way: "Our hearts are oppressed with the emotions of a pious sadness at the thought of the ancient Jehovah who is preparing to die."

The verses were a dirge upon the death of the living God, who was soon, as the author believed, to perish from the belief of reason; and the author, like a well-educated son of the nineteenth century, bestowed a few poetic tears upon the obsequies of the eternal.

There are men at the present day to whom likewise

there is no longer any God, and who do not even affect the politeness of making any lament, but openly exult over their discovery.

But ah! if that should indeed be true! What a funeral pall would it throw over human life! How would it strip existence of its highest aspirations and sweetest consolations!

Science and culture I know, have given us wonderful gifts and have made marvelous discoveries.

But what thoughtful man will dare to say that they have so taken the place of faith in providing for man that religion is of no more use, in these modern days?

What thoughtful man will say that either modern culture or modern science can fill the hearts of its votaries with more sincere joyfulness than the hearts of David or Paul or the humblest true Christians have held?

What thoughtful man will dare to say that any or all of our modern inventions, our patent appliances and boasted sources of enlightenment can do more to make a household contented, or can turn out better, sweeter, higher-minded men and women than religion with its old-fashioned beliefs and principles?

And if science and culture cannot do this,—most certainly they can never take the place of religion.

Remove science and all its admirable discoveries from our modern world, and humanity would indeed be thrust far backward on the path of progress, in straits of daily inconvenience, thoroughly uncomfortable even to imagine.

But expel religion from the world and humanity would miss something still more indispensable. Hu-

manity would suffer the most irreparable of all losses. It would lose the ideals which led it on, the strength in which it faced difficulties and obloquies; the hopes that have consoled it in every trial and bereavement.

There are moments certainly in every one's life when those, fullest stocked with learning, feel themselves as benighted as the most illiterate; when they look in vain to all their science and culture to furnish a gleam of light or hope to illuminate the gloom.

Hear the confession of a German satirist (who had thrown as many bitter mockeries at religion as any man of his generation) in regard to his personal experiences as he stood at the bedside of his dying mother.

"I thought over," said Heinrich Heine, "all the great and the little inventions of man,—the Doctrine of Souls, Newton's System of Attraction, The Universal German Library, the Genera Plantarum, the Calculus Infinitorum, the Magister Matheseos, the Right and the Oblique Ascension of the Stars and their Parallaxes; but nothing would answer. And she lay out of reach, lay on the brink and was going, and I could not even see where she would fall. Then I commended her to God, and went out and composed a prayer for the dying, that she might read it. She was my mother; and she had always loved me so dearly; and this was all that I could do for her."

"We are not great; and our happiness is that we can believe in something greater and better."

Such is the indispensable need of God felt by the human heart, even by such inveterate jesters as a Heine.

Such are the religious instincts of man, not to be denied without working deepest misery and mischief. Now, whichever of the two opposite theories of the formation of these natural needs and instincts we adopt; whether we say, as the theist has formerly done, that they are formed by God Himself, or whether we take the position of the evolutionists, that they are formed by the persistent moulding power of nature over the individual, by the reiterated impressions upon successive generations of the surrounding universe (continuous correspondence with which is the very condition and essence both of life and mind) —on either theory it is impossible to believe that these God-desiring impulses are contradictions of the reality of nature. Can it be thought for a moment, that these inborn affirmations of the soul within man, and of the over-soul without him, are organized delusions on the part of nature, are falsehoods persistently renewed by the universe in the formation of every fresh organism? To believe that were suicidal to all reasoning, to every system of thought. But if that be incredible, if that cannot be accepted, there is no alternative except to recognize in this universal outcry of heart and flesh for the living God, in this instinctive faith in spiritual things, ever springing up afresh, however much it may be trampled upon, a sure attestation of the infinite and eternal realities correspondent to them.

CHAPTER V.

EVOLUTION AND CHRISTIANITY.

In the life and letters of Charles Darwin there is a memorandum copied from his pocket note-book of 1837, to this effect. "In July, opened my first note-book on Transmutation of Species. Had been greatly struck with the character of the South American fossils and the species on Galapagos Archipelago."

These facts, he says, were the origin of all his epoch-making views as to the development of life and the work of natural selection in evolving species.

His first suspicions that species were not immutable and made at one cast, directly by the fiat of the Creator, seemed to him, at the outset, he says, "almost like *murder*."

To the greater part of the church, when in 1859 after twenty years of work, in accumulating the proofs of his theory, he at last gave it to the world, it seemed quite as bad as murder.

It is very interesting now, to look back upon the history and career of the Darwinian theory in the last forty years; to recall, first, the fierce outcry and denunciation it elicited; then, the gradual accumulation of corroboratory evidence from all quarters in its favor; the accession of one scientific authority after another to the new views; the softening little by little, of ecclesiastical opposition; its gradual accept-

ance by the broad-minded, alike in theological and scientific circles; then in these recent years, the exaltation of the new theory into a scientific and philosophic creed, wherein matter, force and evolution constitute the New Trinity, which unless the modern man piously believes, he becomes anathematized and excommunicated by all the priests of the new dogmatism.

In the field of science, undoubtedly, evolution has won the day. Nevertheless, in religious circles, old time prejudices and slow conservatism, clinging to its creeds, as the hermit crab clings to the cast off shell of oyster or clam, still resist it. The great body of the Christian laity, looks askance on it. And even in this progressive American country, one of the largest and most liberal of American denominations not long ago tried and condemned one of its clergy for heresy, on account of the publication of a book, in which the principles of evolution are frankly adopted and applied to Christianity. For a man to call himself a Christian evolutionist, is, (we have been told by high orthodox authority) a contradiction in terms.

I think it is safe to say to-day, that evolution has come to stay. It is too late to turn it out of the mansions of modern thought. And it is therefore a vital question, "can belief in God and the soul and divine revelation abide under the same roof in peace? Or must Christianity vacate the realm of modern thought and leave it to the chilling frosts of materialism and skepticism?

Now, if I have been able to understand the issue and its grounds, there is no such alternative,—no such

incompatibility between evolution and Christianity. There is, I know, a form of evolution and a form of Christianity which are mutually contradictory. There is a form of evolution which is narrowly materialistic. It dogmatically asserts that there is nothing in existence but matter and physical forces and the iron laws according to which they develop. Life, according to this school, is only a product of the happy combination of the atoms; feeling and thought are but the iridescence of the brain-tissues; conscience but a transmuted form of ancestral fears and expediencies. Soul, revelation, providence are nothing but illusions of the childish fancy of humanity. Opposed to this materialism and fighting with all the intensity of those who fight for their very life, stands a school of Christians who maintain that unless the special creation of species, by Divine fiat, and the frequent intervention of God and His angels in the world be admitted, religion has received its death wound. According to this school, unless the world was created in six days, and Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and Hezekiah turned the solar shadow back on the dial, and Jesus was born without human father, and unless some new miracle will interfere with the regular course of law, of rain and dew, of sickness and health, of cause and effect, whenever a believer lifts up his voice in prayer,—why then, the very foundations of religion are destroyed.

Now, of course, between a Christianity and an evolutionism of this sort, there is an irreconcilable conflict. But it is because neither of them is a fair, rational or true form of thought. When the principle

of evolution is properly comprehended and expounded; when Christianity is interpreted in the light that history and philosophy require, the two will be found to have no difficulty in joining hands. Though a purely naturalistic evolutionism may ignore God; and a purely supernatural religion may have no room for evolution, a natural religion and a rational evolution may yet harmoniously unite in a higher and more fruitful marriage. Let us only recognize evolution by the Divine Spirit, as the process of God's working in the world, and we then have a theory which has a place and a function, at once for all that the newest science has to teach and the most venerable faith needs to retain.

In the first place, evolution is not itself a cause; it is no force in itself. It has no originating power. It is simply a method and law of the occurrence of things. Evolution shows that all things proceed, little by little, without breach of continuity; that the higher ever proceeds from the lower; the more complex ever unfolds from the more simple. For every species or form, it points out some ancestor or natural antecedent, from which by gradual modification, it has been derived. And in natural selection, in the influences of the environment, in sexual selection, use and disuse, sterility, and the variability of the organism, science shows us some of the secondary factors or conditions of this development. But none of these are supposed by it to be first causes or originating powers. What these are, science itself does not claim to declare.

Now, it is true, that this unbroken course of development, and this omnipresent reign of law are in-

consistent with the theological theories of supernatural interventions that have so often claimed a monopoly of faith. But independent of all scientific reasons,—on religious and philosophical grounds themselves, this dogmatic view is no longer to be accepted. For if God be the God of all-seeing wisdom and foresight that reverence conceives Him to be, His work should be too perfect from the outset to demand such changes of plan and order of working. The great miracle of miracles, as Isaac Taylor used to say—is that "Providence needs no miracles to carry out its all perfect plans."

But if, I hear it asked,—if the huge machine of the universe thus grinds on and has ever ground on, without interruption; if every event is closely bound to its physical antecedent; life to cell; mind to brain, man to his animal ancestry and bodily conditions,—what other result will there be than an inevitable surrender of materialism? When Laplace was asked by Napoleon, on presenting to him his famous essay on the nebular hypothesis of the origin of the stellar universe—"Why do I see here no mention of the Deity,"—the French astronomer proudly replied—"Sire, I have no need of that hypothesis." Is not that the natural lesson of evolutionism,—to say that God is an hypothesis, no longer needed by science, and which progressive thought, therefore, better dismiss? I do not think so. Old time materialism dismissed the idea of God because it dismissed the idea of a beginning. The forces and phenomena of the world were supposed eternal and therefore a Creator was unnecessary. But the conception of evolution is

radically different. It is a movement, that demands a motor force behind it. It is a movement moreover, that according to the testimony of modern science, cannot have been eternal. The modern theory of heat and the dissipation of energy requires that our solar system and the nebula from which it sprang should have had a beginning in some finite period of time. The evolutionary process cannot have been going on forever; for the amount of heat and the number of degrees of temperature and the rate of cooling, are all finite, calculable quantities, and therefore the process cannot have been going on for more than a certain finite number of years,—more or less millions, say. Moreover, if the original fire-mist was perfectly homogeneous, and not impelled into motion by any external force, it would never have begun to rotate and evolve into planets and worlds. If perfectly homogeneous, it would have remained always balanced and always immobile. To start it on its course of rotation and evolution, there must have been either some external impelling power, or else some original differentiation of forces, for which again some cause, other than itself must be supposed. For the well-known law of inertia forbids that any material system that is in absolute equilibrium should spontaneously start itself into motion. As John Stuart Mill admitted—"the laws of nature can give no account of their own origin."

In the second place, notice that the materialistic interpretation of evolution fails to account for that which is most characteristic in the process; the steady progress it reveals.

Were evolution an aimless, fruitless motion, rising and falling alternately, or moving round and round in an endless circle, the reference of these motions to the blind forces of matter, might have perhaps a certain plausibility. But the movements of the evolution process are of quite a different character; they are not chaotic; they are no barren, useless circlings back to the same point, again and again. They are progressive; and if often they seem to return to their point of departure, we see, on close examination, that the return is always on a higher plane. The motion is a spiral one, ever advancing to loftier and loftier ranges.

Now this progressive motion is something that no accidental play of the atoms will account for. For chance builds no such rational structures; chance writes no such intelligent dramas, with orderly beginning, crescendo and climax. Or if some day, chance builds a structure with some show of order in it, to-morrow it pulls it down. It does not move steadily forward with permanent constructions.

The further science penetrates into the secrets of the universe the more regular seems the march of thought presented there; the more harmonious the various parts; the more rational the grand system that is discovered. "How the one force of the universe should have pursued the pathway of evolution through the lapse of millions of ages, leaving traces so legible by intelligence to-day, unless from beginning to end the whole process had been dominated by intelligence," has well been said to pass the limits of conjecture. The all luminous intelligibility of the universe is the all sufficient proof of the intelligence

of the cause that produced it. In the annals of science there is nothing more curious than the prophetic power which those savans have gained who have grasped this secret of nature—the rationality of the universe. It was by this confidence in finding in the hitherto unexplained domains of nature what reason demanded, that Goethe, from the analogies of the mammalian skeleton discovered the intermaxillary bone in man; and Sir William Hamilton from the mathematical consequences of the undulation of light led the way to the discovery of conical refraction.

A similar story is told of Professor Agassiz and Professor Pierce, the one, the great zoologist, the other the great mathematician of Harvard University. Agassiz, having studied the formation of radiate animals and having found them all referable to three different plans of structure, asked Professor Pierce, without informing him of his discovery, how to execute all the variations possible, conformed to the fundamental idea of a radiated structure around a central axis. Professor Pierce, although quite ignorant of natural history, at once devised the very three plans, discovered by Agassiz, as the only fundamental plans which could be framed in accordance with the given elements.

How significantly do such correspondences speak of the working of mind in nature, moulding it in conformity with ideas of reason. Thus to see the laws of thought exhibiting themselves as also the laws of being seems to me a fact sufficient of itself to prove the presence of an overruling mind in nature.

Is there any way of escaping this obvious conclu-

sion? The only method that has been suggested has been to refer these harmonies of nature back to the original regularity of the atoms.

As the drops of frozen moisture on the window pane build up the symmetrical frost-forms, without design or reason, by virtue of the original similarity of the component parts, so do the similar atoms, without any more reason or plan, build up the harmonious forms of nature.

But this answer brings us face to face with a third significant problem, a still greater obstacle to materialism. Why are the atoms of nature thus regular—thus exactly similar, one to another? Here are millions on millions of atoms of gold, each just alike. Millions and millions of atoms of oxygen, each with the same velocity of movement, the same weight, size and chemical properties. All the millions on millions of atoms on the globe are not of infinitely varied shape, weight, size, quality; but there are only some seventy different kinds; and all the millions of one kind are substantially alike, so that each new atom of oxygen that comes to a burning flame does the same work and acts in precisely the same way as its fellows.

Did you ever think of that? If you have ever realized what it means, you must recognize this uniformity of the atoms, billions and billions of them as like one another as if run out of the same mould, as the most astonishing thing in nature.

Now, among the atoms, there can have been no birth, no death, no struggle for existence, no natural selection to account for this. What other explanation, then, in reason is there, than to say as those great

men of science, Sir John Herschel and Clerk Maxwell (who have in our day, most deeply pondered this curious fact) have said,—that this division of all the infinite host of atoms in nature into a very limited number of groups, all the billions of numbers in each group precisely alike in their mechanical and chemical properties, gives to each of the atoms "the essential characters, at once of a manufactured article and a subordinate agent."

Evolution cannot then be justly charged with materialism. On the contrary, it especially demands a divine creative force as the starter of its processes and the endower of the atoms with their peculiar properties. The foundation of that scientific system which the greatest of modern expositors of evolution has built up about the principle of development (I mean, of course, Herbert Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy), is the persistence of an infinite, eternal and indestructible force, of which all things that we see are the manifestations.

The evolution theory is indeed hostile to that phase of theology which conceived of God as a being outside of nature. To suppose, as many of the camp-followers of the evolution philosophy do, that the processes of successive change and gradual modification which have been so clearly traced out in nature, relieve us from the need or right of asking for any anterior and higher cause of these processes; or that because the higher and finer always unfolds from the lower and coarser, therefore there was really nothing else in existence at the beginning than these crude elements which alone we see at first; and that

these gross, sensuous facts are the only source and explanation of all that has followed them,—this is a most superficial and inadequate view. For this explanation, as we have already noticed, furnishes no fountain head of power to maintain the constant upward-mounting of the waters in the world's conduits. It furnishes no intelligent directions of these streams into ever wise and ordered channels. To explain the higher life that comes out of these low beginnings, we must suppose the existence of spiritual powers, unseen at first, and disclosing themselves only in the fuller, later results, the moral and spiritual phenomena that are the crowning flower and fruit of the long process. When a thing has grown from a lower to a higher form, its real rank and nature is not shown by what it began in, but by what it has become. Though chemistry has grown out of alchemy and astronomy out of astrology, this does not empty them of present truth or impair at all their authority and trustworthiness to-day. Though man's minds have grown out of the sensations of brutish ancestors, that does not take away the fact that he has now risen to a height from which he overlooks all their mists and sees the light which never was on sea or land. The real beginning of a statue is not in the rough outline in which it first appears, but in the creative idea of the perfect work which regulates its whole progress.

So to discern the real character and motor power of the world's evolution, we must look, not to the beginnings, but to its end; and see in the latest stages and its highest moral and spiritual forms and forces,—not disguises of the earlier stages, but ampler mani-

festations of that divine power and purpose which is the ever-active agent, working through all the varied levels of creation.

The evolution theory is, indeed, it must be acknowledged, hostile to that phase of theology which conceives of God as a being outside of nature; which regarded the universe as a dead lump, a mechanical fabric where the Creator once worked, at the immensely remote dawn of creation; and to which again for a few short moments, this transcendental Power stooped from His celestial throne, when the successive species of living beings were called into being, in brief exertions of supernatural energy. But this mechanical view of God who, as Goethe said, "only from without should drive and twirl the universe about," what a poor conception of God, after all, was that;—not undeserving the ridicule of the great German.

Certainly, the idea of God which Wordsworth has given us, as a power, not indefinitely remote, but ever present and infinitely near,—

> "A motion and a spirit which impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts
> And rolls through all things."

is a much more inspiring and venerable thought. This is the conception of God that Paul has given us; "the God in whom we live and move and have our being"; this is the conception that the Book of Wisdom gives us,—"the Divine Spirit who filleth the world." And to this conception of God, evolution has no antagonism; but on the contrary, throws its immense weight in its favor.

Evolution in fact, instead of removing the Deity from us, brings Him close about us; sets us face to face with His daily activities. The universe is but the body of which God is the soul; "the interior Artist," as Giordano Bruno used to say, who from within, moulds His living shapes of beauty and power. What else in fact is evolution but the secular name for the Divine Indwelling; the scientific *alias* for the growth and progressive revelation of the Holy Spirit, daily putting off the old and putting on the new; constantly busy from the beginning of time to this very day; incessantly moulding and forwarding His work.

Not long ago I came across the mental experience of a working geologist which well illustrates this. "Once in early boyhood," he says, "I left a lumberman's camp at night, to go to the brook for water. It was a clear, cold, moonlight night, and very still, except the distant murmuring of the Penobscot at some falls. A sense of the grandeur of the forest and rivers; the hills and sky and stars came over the boy and he stood and looked around. An owl hooted and the hooting was not a cheerful sound. The men were all asleep and the conditions were lonely enough. But there was no feeling of loneliness; for with the sense of the grandeur of creation, came the sense very real and strong of the Creator's presence. In boyish imagination, I could see His Almighty hand, shaping the hills and scooping out the valleys, spreading the sky overhead and making trees, animals and men."

"Thirty years later, I camped alone in the open air on the bank of the Gila. It was a clear, cold, moonlight night. The camp-fire was low, for the Apaches

were on the war path. An owl again hooted. But again all loneliness was dispelled by a sense of the Creator's presence, and the night of long ago by the Penobscot came into my mind; and with it, came the question: What is the difference to my mind between the Creator's presence, now and then?"

"To the heart, it was very like; but to the mind very different. Now, no great hand was shaping things from without. But God was everywhere reaching down through long lines of forces and shaping and sustaining things from within. I had been traveling all day by mountains of lava which had cooled long ages ago, and over grounds, which the sea, now far off, had left on its beaches; and with the geologist's habit, recalled the lava still glowing and flowing, and the sea still rattling its pebbles on the beaches. But now, I knew it was by forces within the earth that the lava was poured out, and that the waves which rolled the pebbles were driven by the wind and the wind by the sun's heat. And the forces within the earth and the heat within the sun came from still further within. Inward, always inward, the search for the original energy and law, carried my mind; for He, whose will is the source of all force, and whose thought is the source of all law is on the inside of the universe. The kingdom of God is within you" (James E. Mills).

Now this change from the boyish idea of God creating things from without, to the manhood's view of God, creating and sustaining all things from within, is, indeed as this working geologist so well says, "the essential change which modern science has wrought in the habit of religious thought."

From Copernicus to Darwin, every important step in the development of science has cost the giving up of some idea of God creating things, as man shapes them, from without, and has illustrated the higher idea of a God, reaching His works from within. "Every step has led towards the truth that life and force come to the forms in which they are clothed, from God by the inner way; and by the same way, their law comes with them; and that the forms are the effects of the force and life, acting according to the law."

Now, this is certainly a most noble, uplifting conception of the world. But how, perhaps you ask, can we find justification for such a view of the Divine Spirit as indwelling in nature?

Now when we consider this question, we find that one of the phases of the evolution philosophy that has been a chief source of alarm is precisely the one that lends signal support to this doctrine of Divine Indwelling.

Evolution especially excites aversion, because it connects man so closely with nature; our souls are traced back to an animal origin; consciousness to instinct, instinct to sensibility and this to lower laws and properties of force. By the law of the correlation of forces, our mental and spiritual powers are regarded as but transformed phases of physical forces, conditioned as they are on our bodily states and changes; and the soul, it is said, is but a child of nature, who is most literally its mother.

To many minds this is appalling. But let us look it candidly in the face and see its full bearing. We will recall in the first place, the scientific law: no life

but from preceding life. Let us recollect next the dictum of mechanics: no fountain can rise higher than its source. The natural corollary and consequence of this is—no evolution without preceding involution. If mind and consciousness come out of nature, they must first have been enveloped in nature; resident within its depths. If the spirit within our hearts is one with the force that stirs the sense and grows in the plant; then that sea of energy that envelops us is also spirit.

When we come to examine the idea of force, we find that there is only one form in which we get any direct knowledge of it, only one place in which we come into contact with it; and that is in our own conscious experiences; in the efforts of our own will.

According to the scientific rule always "to interpret the unknown by the known, not the known by the unknown,"—it is only the rational conclusion that force elsewhere is also will. Through this personal experience of energy, we get, just once, an inside view of the universal energy, and we find it to be spiritual; the will-force of the infinite Spirit, dwelling in all things. That the encircling force of the universe can best be understood through the analogy of our own sense of effort, and therefore is a form of will, of spirit, is a conclusion endorsed by the most eminent men of science, such as Huxley, Herschel, Carpenter and Le Conte.

There is therefore no real efficient force but spirit. The various energies of nature are but different forms or special currents of this Omnipresent Divine Power. The laws of nature are only the wise and regular

habits of this active Divine will; physical phenomena are but projections of God's thought on the screen of space; and evolution is simply the slow, gradual unrolling of the panorama on the great stage of time.

In geology and paleontology, evolution is not directly observed, but only inferred. The process is too slow;—the stage too grand for direct observation. There is one field and only one where it has been directly observed. This is in the case of domestic animals and plants under man's charge. Now, as here, where alone we see evolution going on, it is under the guidance of superintending mind,—it is a justifiable inference that in nature, also, it goes on under similar intelligent guidance.

Now, it is the observation of distinguished men of science that we see precisely such guidance in nature. There is nothing in the Darwinian theory, as I said, that would conduct species upward rather than downward. To account for the steady upward progress we must resort to a higher cause. We must say with Asa Gray—"Variation has been led along certain beneficial lines, like a stream along definite and useful lines of irrigation." We must say with Professor Owen: "A purposive route of development and change, of correlation and interdependence, manifesting intelligent will, is as determinable in the succession of races as in the development and organization of the individual. Generations do not vary accidentally, in any and every direction; but in preordained, definite and correlated courses."

This judgment is one which Professor Carpenter has also substantially agreed with, declaring that the his-

tory of evolution is that of a consistent advance along definite lines of progress, and can only be explained as the work of a mind in nature.

The old argument from design, it has been frequently said of late, is quite overthrown by evolution. In one sense it is: *i. e.*, the old idea of a special purpose and a separate creation of each part of nature. But the divine agency is not dispensed with by evolution; it is only shifted to a different point of application; it is transferred from the particular to the general, from the fact to the law. Paley compared the eye to a watch, and said it must have been made by a divine hand. The modern scientist objects that the eye has been found to be no hand-work. It is the last result of a complicated combination of forces; the mighty machine of nature, which has been grinding at the work for thousands of years. Very well—but the modern watch is not made by hand, either; but by a score of different machines. But does it require less, or more intelligence to make the watch in this way? Or if some watch should be discovered that was not put together by a human hand,—but formed by another watch, not quite so perfect as itself, and this by another watch, further back,—would the wonder and the demand for a superior intelligence as the origin of the process be any the less? Rather would it be greater. The further back you go and the more general and invariable and simple you suppose the fundamental laws to have been that brought all things into their present form, then it seems to me, the more marvelous becomes the miracle of the eye, the ear, each bodily organ when recognized as a climax to

whose consummation each successive stage of the world has contributed. How much more significant of progressive intelligence than any special creation is this related whole, this host of co-ordinated molecules, —this complex system of countless interwoven laws and movements, all driven forward, straight to their mark, down the vistas of the ages, to the grand world consummation of to-day! What else but Omniscience is equal to this?

All law, then, we should regard as a divine operation, and all divine operation, conversely, obeys law. Whatever phenomena we consider as specially divine ought to be most orderly and true to nature. Religion, as far as it is genuine, must therefore be natural. It should be no exotic, no foreign graft, as it is often regarded, but the normal outgrowth of our native instincts. Evolution does not banish revelation from our belief. Recognizing in man's spirit a spark of the divine energy, "individuated to the power of self-consciousness and recognition of God:—tracing the development of the spirit embryo through all geologic time till it came to birth and independent life in man, and humanity recognized itself as a child of God," the communion of the finite spirit with the infinite is perfectly natural. This direct influence of the spirit of God on the spirit of man; in conscience speaking to him of the moral law; through prophet and apostle declaring to us the great laws of spiritual life and the beauty of holiness—this is what we call revelation. The laws which it observes are superior laws,—quite above the plane of material things. But the work of revelation is not therefore infallible or outside the

sphere of evolution. On the contrary, one of the most noticeable features of revelation is its progressive character. In the beginning, it is imperfect, dim in its vision of truth, often gross in its forms of expression. But from age to age it gains in clearness and elevation. In religion, as in secular matters, it is the lesson of the ages, that "the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

How short-sighted, then, are they who seek to compress the broadening vision of modern days within the narrow loopholes of mediæval creeds. "There is still more light to break from the words of Scripture," was the brave protest of Robinson to the bigots of his day. And as we say amen, to that, we may add—"yes; and more light still to come from the whole heavens and the whole earth." If we wish to see that light and receive the richest rewards of God's revealing word, we must face the sun of truth and follow bravely forward.

As we look back upon the long path of evolution up which God's hand has already led humanity; as we see from what lowliness and imperfection, from what darkness and grossness God has led us to our present heritage of truth and spiritual life, may we not feel sure, that, if we go forward obediently, loyal to reason, we shall find a new heavens and more glorious, above our head; a new earth and a nobler field of work beneath our feet?

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AS LITERATURE.

In an age long past there lived a wonderful artist, whom men called the Divine Sculptor, so grand and beautiful were the productions of his chisel.

He had carved many previous forms of beauty; but one day, he found a huge tusk shed by some mammoth; and sculpturing from it a perfect foot and leg, he vowed that it should be the beginning of a statue, entirely carved in whitest ivory.

It was only very slowly that the statue grew; for it was only at long intervals that suitable pieces of ivory were found. But bit by bit, the legs, body, arms and head were built up, until at last, after many long years, the artist completed his cherished work.

It was a form of rarest nobility, and instinct with highest aspiration, albeit full of childlike simplicity and ingenuousness. It represented the genius of his nation, robed in quaint antique garments, posed in the most natural of attitudes, with finger pointing upward to heaven and look of devout rapture. No passer-by could fail to be filled with admiration for this masterpiece of art.

But, anon, war broke out; invaders poured into the land; and the owners of the precious statue for safety's sake, dismembered it and hid it away in the ground.

Long centuries rolled by ere it was discovered again and disinterred. Now, it lay in fragments, soiled with the stains of earth and water and the ravages of time.

Its discoverers revered it as a divine image and proceeded to put together its separated members in such form as they believed a divine image should have. To put the various members in their natural places would make a mere human image of it, they thought. So, to avoid such dishonor and make it into as supernatural an image as possible, the legs were inserted in the armpits, the arms at the middle of the back, the ears were stuck in the eye-sockets, the feet where the ears should have been, and the head was made to sprout from below the breasts. And all the people bowed down to it; and as they knelt about it, they covered up its ivory surface still deeper with paint and tinsel and tawdry gilding, and worshipped it as a God. And, indeed, it was of a certainty, like nothing ever seen on the earth nor in the skies above nor the waters beneath the earth.

So passed many long ages, till the monstrous conglomeration had become sacred with the holiness of a vast antiquity.

But at length there arose a man as wise as he was bold, who in long and patient studies examined carefully the curious image. He scraped away the dust and grime of time and the tawdry gilding with which the statue had been overlaid, and discovered the beautiful pure ivory that was hid beneath. And by comparing the various parts, he learned their normal arrangement and the original human shape in which they had been moulded by their great artificer. And

calling his fellow-citizens together, he begged them to cleanse the precious statue of its meretricious paint and excrescences and rearrange the bodily members and parts after a natural model so that the noble form under which the genius of the race had been portrayed might stand once more before them.

But alas! he found himself at once stigmatized as an impious infidel and blaspheming iconoclast, who denied the sanctity and beauty of the Divine Being, whose legs grew from his shoulders, whose feet issued from his ears, and whose head sprouted below his breast. And in their rage, the multitude took up stones and stoned the poor man till his life-blood ran out on the ground before the image; and as they stoned him, they shouted: "Our ancient image is not human; it is divine."

And as the unlucky reformer fell beneath the missiles, he raised his voice and said: "You stone me to-day. But the time will surely come when your children shall see that it is as I say. Where I fall, another shall stand and show you more clearly that it is not I, but you who would degrade this beautiful statue. Another and yet another shall come to show you what a monster you have made of this masterpiece and what a marvel of natural grandeur and grace you may bring out of this misshapen image if you will but rearrange it according to the dictates of reason and the type of nature. You say it is divine and therefore it cannot be human. But I say that it is precisely because it is so perfectly human that it is divine,—far diviner and grander than you have ever dreamed. And the grandchildren of you who to-day

are pelting me to death shall then build out of these same death-dealing stones, a monument in my honor, before the restored and purified statue of the genius of your people."

And all the people screamed again with rage and threw another volley of stones that silenced forever the unfortunate martyr.

Nevertheless, in the age of their grandchildren, it happened even as the martyr had predicted; and out of the stones was built a famous monument. And when the sacred image stood again before the people's eyes, in all its original nobility and naturalness of form, all the nation wondered how blind their grandfathers could have been to adore the misshapen image.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit of Truth hath to say here and now to the Christian Church.

The parable just related, as the reader has doubtless guessed, is intended to illustrate the treatment which the Bible has received at the hands of men. Like the statue of my fable, this literary embodiment of the genius of the Hebrew race has also been dismembered, mangled, and distorted by mistaken piety, and covered thick with the cheap gilding of an imaginary supernaturalism. Because it was believed to be the Word of God, credulous reverence has shut its eyes to all recognition of its human origin, and sought to

eliminate from it all natural traits and elements. And when the higher criticism in these latter days, has essayed to restore to it its original symmetry and natural beauty, and to make manifest in its noble humanity its true divineness,—all the guns of orthodoxy have been trained in furious cannonade upon these alleged profanations of the Word of God.

In spite of this ecclesiastical fusilade, we may safely predict that it is only a question of time, and that, no distant time, when the Old Testament shall be looked upon as literature. Hitherto that is precisely the one light in which it has not been regarded.

In the popular faith the Old Testament has been looked upon as everything else but literature. It has been regarded as a magazine of dogmas; as a scientific treatise, making the investigations of geology and biology superfluous; as an infallible moral code, any one of whose precepts overruled all the instincts of mercy or the intuitions of conscience; as a heavenly double acrostic, every word filled with threefold significance, natural, spiritual and celestial; in short, as a specimen of supernatural penmanship, all its parts equally authoritative and flawless. The result has been to give the Bible an artificial and formal air, to separate it from the living world of reality, to obscure and befog its natural excellences, and to fill it with uncalled for difficulties.

It is lamentable, indeed, to recall the many inconsistencies and incredibilities which the traditional view has needlessly raised up, transmuting lyric metaphors into scientific marvels, traditions of later days into contemporaneous records, romances into autobiog-

raphies, poetry into prose, parables into predictions, and love songs into mystic allegories.

When the Pentateuch is claimed to be throughout written by Moses himself, all the Psalms by David, and the whole Old Testament to have been so divinely inspired as to be infallible, with what plain contradictions and insoluble entanglements are we brought face to face? It is these especially that have drawn upon the Bible the jeers and ridicule of the unbelievers and the keen thrust of every skeptic. They have led to the "mistakes of Moses" being paraded up and down the land, and flouted and riddled with the most cutting wit and the bitterest of mockeries. And they have seduced the pious-minded, who were not altogether irrational, to a further wrong to the Bible; viz., to the most desperate attempts to warp and twist the sacred texts so as, somehow, to reconcile the conflicting passages.

But when we look upon the Old Testament as literature, we are no longer tempted to torture in this way the simple statements of these ancient writers. Our only ambition is to find out what they really meant. And we are not diverted from a consideration of their essential truth or nobleness, and put into an antagonistic, flaw-picking attitude by extravagant claims for them of a character that they themselves never pretended to possess. Give a young man, for example, the Book of Jonah to read as a part of God's infallible word, and how soon will his reason (naturally led to give a careful test to any such momentous claim) run against the snags of the whale and the gourd and the other marvels of the story, and the whole attention

be fixed on these, either to ridicule and reject or to defend and explain them away! Meanwhile the real lesson of the book, the broad tolerance and forgivingness of spirit, the omnipresence and universal love of God, that it aimed to inculcate, is altogether neglected. But present the book simply as a piece of ancient literature, an old legend current among the Hebrews, or a parable invented to enforce a lesson, and how easily is all the supernatural part of the story seen to be only the imaginative framework and embellishment of its noble religious lesson, no more affronting common sense or diverting attention from the spiritual teaching involved than do the giants and marvels in "Pilgrim's Progress" prevent the reader of that from appropriating the similar moral lessons therein contained!

Again, to look upon the Old Testament as literature gives it a worth and an interest which it has failed to obtain under the traditional view. As a piece of divine penmanship, as a flawless fetich before which reason was devoutly to close its eyes, much of it was useless. Forbidden to criticise or discriminate, the only refuge was in ignoring altogether large parts of the Bible, and leaving their pages (after the first reading from cover to cover, which pious tradition demanded) henceforth unopened. For here was passage after passage, which we were assured was just as sacred and true as anything else, from which we could obtain no food for either the mind or the heart. Here were palpable antagonisms of statement, impossible to harmonize; badly joined seams where earlier documents were patched together; coarse traditions that in

any other book would be suppressed as indelicate; ritualistic details and ceremonial formalities of a thoroughly peurile and impractical character, at least for our day and generation; barbarous revenges and imprecations, claiming the direct command of undoubted inspiration of the divine. How many such blots as these burdened the sacred text! But, when we recognize the Old Testament as literature, all these things become not only interesting, but valuable. These clumsy sutures of the earlier documents are precious as fine gold and sweeter than the honeycomb to the Biblical critics. These palpable discrepancies of the accounts and the partisan or sectional bias disclosed by each are the precious seals identifying the different documents and authors; and the very scientific mistakes and moral imperfections that we find, are the water-marks of date and country, the incontestable proofs of their antiquity; and even the very crudest fancies and most barbarous legends, wholly inadmissible to the witness-box of history, are welcomed as priceless relics of that primeval mythologic age in which all religion and history began, and are the best of evidence that the Jewish religion had the same natural origin as all other faiths. What can the Bible reader who accepts it all as one infallible Word of God do with such passages as that where Jehovah is said to "walk in the garden in the cool of the evening"; where the Elohim (using the polytheistic plural) say: "Let us make man"; "Behold, the man is become as one of us"? How is the pious believer in the infallibility of the Bible to explain the graven and molten images; the ephods and teraphim which as

late as Samuel's time were a part of the equipment of a priest of Jehovah; the household idols which David kept in his house; the golden bulls worshipped down to Jeroboam's day; the relics of serpent-worship, in the brazen serpent which, as late as the reign of Hezekiah, was an object of veneration among the Israelites; and the vestiges of devil-worship even, in the goat carried into the wilderness as a propitiation to the demon Azazel, disguised in our version under the name of the scapegoat,—what, I say, on the traditional theory of the Old Testament, can be done with these survivals of old nature worship and beast worship left in its pages, except to pass over and forget them as quickly as possible? But, when the Old Testament is recognized as literature, they become the most significant footmarks of the slow upward progress of Hebrew faith, confirming the account, which anthropology and the history of religions in general have given, of the successive stages of man's spiritual pilgrimage.

And this leads us to notice the new vividness and human interest which the sacred record gains when its similarity of origin with other books is recognized.

There is a somewhat familiar but instructive story of a boy who, on receiving a letter from a young companion at Malta, speaking of his visit to the place of St. Paul's shipwreck, exclaimed, "Why, father, did that happen in this world?"

So to many a pious reader the incidents and characters of the Old Testament are never realized as actual occurrences and "flesh-and-blood" persons, but they always stand before the imagination, as the

old painters distinguished their saints, with a halo of supernatural light about their head and the stiffness and unreality of so many wooden images in all their limbs.

But now, when we study these records as literature, we soon catch sight of a host of significant little hints, showing that these old priests and prophets were men of like passions such as we are, and that the notable incidents in their careers had their springs in the social forces, political exigencies, or personal motives of an actual, breathing world.

Take the figure of David, as the man after God's own heart, and author of all the Psalms, as church tradition has presented him to us. Certainly, this is a most inconsistent and artificial figure. But the David whom the new criticism shows, the chief of a band of outlaws who by his military exploits rises to the throne, brave and generous towards his friends, but unrelenting and vindictive towards his foes, and unscrupulous in removing those who stood in his ambitious pathway,—a nature at war with itself, holding within him in constant struggle the typical virtues and vices of a society just passing over from barbarism to semi-civilization,—this David is an exceedingly natural and interesting character.

Or take the book of Job. Looked at as an authoritative revelation in explanation of the misfortunes of the righteous, it is certainly very unsatisfactory. If we consider it as a direct revelation from God to explain the origin of evil and the calamities of the righteous, that explanation amounts substantially to this,—to refer them to the wiles of Satan and the

capricious permission of the Almighty, before whose power man should be dumb; and it omits altogether from the answer the Christian solution of a future personal life for which this life is the training.

As the instruction of a divine revelation, this is terribly crude and disappointing. But, looking at Job as literature, we have in it the most poignant depiction of a soul in agony; the most powerful presentation of the struggling forces of doubt, despair, indignant virtue, invincible faith in divine goodness, pathetic humility, and the self-abnegating devotedness that can cling to the Divine Hand even when all hope of personal happiness has vanished, that we have in any book, ancient or modern, East or West. We may discuss to the end of time whether there ever was an historic Job who lived in the land of Uz, or whether the book is a pure fiction; but, surely, we cannot doubt that this picture of Job on his ash-heap, pierced to the heart by the unjust suspicions of his pretended friends, and pouring out his heart (as the strong gusts of passion, at their cruel impeachment of his innocency, and the billows of his own unbearable agony sweep to and fro), in such scornful denials of personal transgression, such appeals to his divine Judge, such dread misgivings, now of God's justice, now of his own righteousness, and at last finding peace in a child-like resignation to the divine will, however bitter,— surely, we cannot doubt that this wondrous representation of bitterest spiritual struggle came from a heart that had itself been in the deep waters, and had to tread the wine-press of grief alone. And, if we date its composition in the dark days of the eighth century,

when the old faith of Israel in Jehovah's earthly rewards to His faithful servants was given such a wrench, when the Northern kingdom had gone down in ruins, and the terrible invasions of the Assyrians swept over their land, like so many tornadoes, respecting neither just nor unjust, and poor King Hezekiah lived, as Renan vividly says, "like a bird on a twig," watching which way to fly the next minute,—then the social and political setting of the picture makes it not merely a personal experience, but a national experience and a national enigma that are thus movingly set before us.

Thus does the literary view of the Old Testament humanize it, and endow it with heightened power and influence over its readers. And, as it takes on a more graphic life, there comes with this, simultaneously, a disclosure of more defined individuality and an affluence of national genius, not before suspected. When the Old Testament is regarded as a single continuous Divine Oracle, the tendency, of course, is to overlook as much as possible all diversities of authorship or style, because all must be equally divine, equally perfect. But, when it is viewed as literature, the varied contents of this sacred collection of the national remains are hailed with pleasure, and it becomes quite astonishing how many-sided the Israelite genius was. There were not simply the recognized three or four kinds of books,—law, prophecy, history, and psalmody,—but almost every kind that any modern encyclopædia of English or German literature would exhibit; allegory in Jotham's parable; the drama in Job; satire in Ecclesiastes; an opera or cantata in

Canticles; ethnographic tables of the revelations of nations; didactic poems, as in Proverbs; national lyrics, as in a dozen or more of the Psalms; primitive sagas and war-songs, as in the patriarchal legends and in the songs of Moses and Deborah; fragments of epics, as in the remnants of the Wars of Jehovah and the Book of Jashar; snatches of popular ditties, like the Song of the Well and the Sword Song of Lamech; historical romances, like Daniel and Esther; novels with a purpose, like Jonah; political polemics and orations, such as some of the prophetical writings may quite properly be called. Such is the remarkable variety in the contents of the Old Testament that we find in it, when viewed as literature.

Or look through the lens of Biblical criticism at writers of the same class, among whom we have heretofore supposed little diversity because all were in such a peculiar way the mouthpieces of the divine inspiration. I mean the prophets. Notice how enigmatic and vaguely figurative are some of them; how confident and precise in their predictions, a second class; and how much shrewder and more nearly accurate in their forecasts, a third class. And it is by no means those who were most bold and self-assured in their predictions whom history has most confirmed.

What an interesting diversity of personal characteristics and literary style distinguishes them, as we follow down the stream of history! Notice the rustic figures of speech and pastoral simplicity of the first two,—Amos and Hosea,—a style straightforward, sententious, and pregnant with compressed feeling. In Micah, also, we have another "man of the people,"

terse and strong of utterance, denouncing in scathing terms the wrongs suffered by the poor of Israel at the hands of the rich and noble.

In Isaiah we meet with a genius of different type, familiar with the best society of the times and with international politics, possessed of a glowing wealth of imagination and vividness of illustration, clothed in a diction of dignified splendor and energetic elegance.

In Nahum and Habakkuk we have two more ardent spirits, pouring out their impassioned thoughts in the boldest of imagery. What dramatic power, especially, is there in that "Pindaric Ode" of Habakkuk's, as it has been called, where he looks forth from his watch-tower to see what the Lord will show him, and describes with such majesty of thought and diction the vision of the woes drawing nigh to his people!

As we come down to the times of the Babylonish captivity, we hear the deepened tragedy of Israel's fate reverberating in the melancholy cadences of its great writers; in the artless pathos of Jeremiah's voice so broken with patriotic tears; and in the sombre imagery and weird allegorical figures of Ezekiel (though often, it must be confessed, somewhat overloaded and bizarre). In the impassioned rhetoric of the second Isaiah in the heart-moving touches, picturesque imagery, and superbly effective personifications of this great unknown prophet of the sixth century, the poetical genius of Israel reached its climax; and in the clear, logical, and dialectic treatment of his theme in Malachi,—going without any flourish right at the pith of the matter,—we see that the roll of the prophets is about to be closed, and that a simpler, more concise

and lucid school of writing is about to succeed them.

And not only has the study of Biblical literature brought out the individualities of the different books of the Old Testament in instructive clearness, but within the envelope of what had been deemed the work of single authors it discovers a multiplicity of hands, and points out their personal characteristics in a most interesting manner. As the telescope and spectrum of the astronomer have resolved what seemed single stars into binary or ternary solar systems, so has the lens of higher criticism shown us Isaiah and Zachariah to be each a double star, and the Pentateuch of Moses to be a complex system of four or five, or perhaps even more, noble literary suns and planets. This complex composition and gradual growth, throughout six or seven centuries, of the first five books, not long ago ascribed to Moses alone as their author, is the most notable achievement of the higher criticism. It has endowed this part of the Old Testament, to the eager student of truth and to all spirits ambitious of disentangling knotty problems, with a fascination akin to that which the authorship of Junius had in the last century, or the decipherment of the Assyrian hieroglyphics has in our day. Renan has well compared the task, in its delicacy and difficulty, to the decipherment of the papyri of Herculaneum, whose pages were so imbedded and stuck together into calcined blocks that, though the letters might be visible, it was impossible to say to what page they respectively belonged. But, as the careful unrolling and patching together of these papyri by the

classical scholars have introduced consistent order into these manuscripts, so have the patient comparisons and piecings-together of these Biblical documentary layers and fragments by Graf and Wellhausen, and especially by that prince of Biblical critics, Kuenen, succeeded in building up again the ancient medley of historical and legendary remains into an intelligible literary structure.

Church history tells us that in the second century an early predecessor of Dr. Robinson in the work of gospel welding and tinkering, mortised together, out of the four gospels, a harmony of the life of Christ which he called the Diatessaron. Now, suppose this compilation had been so successful that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had no longer been copied in their original and independent form, but had been entirely swallowed up by the new compilation, and the very memory of their separate existence been quite forgotten. Suppose that the new compilation had been baptized with the name "the Books of Jesus," and that the Church should then have resisted as pious profanation the idea that any part of this patchwork calling itself the authentic history of Christ was written by any one except the man of Nazareth with His own hand! Then we should have a pretty fair parallel to the way that the students of the Pentateuch have been fettered, and the difficulties that they have had to contend with in analyzing the so-called Books of Moses. But, as no one to-day would think that the fourfold gospel narrative and its complex testimony would have gained either interest or historic value if it had been thus superseded by Tatian's single com-

pilation, so no one ought to fail to see how much the Pentateuch really gains in attractiveness and power by this critical disinterment of the four or five separate writings that have been hitherto engulfed by it. It gives us that invaluable base line of measurement and parallax of position only to be had where two or more different points of view are found. It enables us to estimate better the refraction of the lines of historic fact produced by the sectional or political or ecclesiastic bias of the various writers. And it adds to the illustrious group of Hebrew authors four or five notable figures, who, though unnamed, possess most marked personal characteristics as well as local and partisan traits.

In the earliest of these, the second Elohist, we discover a writer of the ninth or tenth century, B. C., living in the neighborhood of Bethel or Shechem, who delighted in collecting the old folk-lore and patriarchial legends of his race, and who has given us a most charming and ingenuous picture of the primitive ages of humanity. Piquant and naïve in style, marked by a certain infantile candor and rough sublimity, devotedly chronicling all the quaint myths and ethnographic genealogies and details that he heard of; with patriotic pride claiming for the ancestors of the Northern tribes ancient possession of all the good things of the country; quite ignorant of any law limiting sacrifices or altars to Jerusalem; betraying a scarcely veiled polytheism on every page,—this first collection of the Israelite legends, which became the nucleus round which the rest of the Bible formed itself, has well been compared by Renan to Homer, so

fresh and sparkling is it with the morning dew of humanity's childhood. "This unknown writer," says Renan, with but little if any exaggeration "has created half the poetry of humanity. His stories are like a breath of the world's springtime; their freshness is only equaled by their crude grandeur; man, when these pages were written, still lived in a world of myths. Multitudes of Elohim filled the air, manifested by mysterious whispers, unknown noises and terrors which produced panic. Man had nocturnal struggles with them, out of which he emerged wounded. Elohim appeared in triple form, and his sons take unto them wives of the daughters of men. Morality is scarcely born; the mind of the Elohim is capricious, sometimes absurd; the world is very small, heaven is reached by a ladder, or, rather, a pyramid with steps; messengers constantly pass from earth to the empyrean. Dreams are celestial revelations, visions of God" (Renan, pp. 177, 178, vol. II).

In the author of the second great stratum of the Pentateuch (or, perhaps more accurately, the Hexateuch; for the Book of Joshua is an integral part and close continuation of the first five books) we have probably a man of the Southern kingdom, but of the eight or ninth century, B. C., and of quite a different type of mind. His genius is less unsophisticated and sunny. He is a man of a sombre and austere temperament and more philosophic cast of mind, oppressed with the consciousness of the sin in the world and full of forebodings of the wrath of Jehovah; emphasizing the jealous nature and irresistible will of the "I AM," greatest of all the gods; delighting in medi-

tations and explanations of the origin of evil and in chronicling the woes that descend upon sinful humanity. Civilization to him is a path of decadence and demoralization; the thirst for knowledge is the root of all evil; social progress, a defiance of God's laws and loss of Paradise; the first city originated in murder and transgression. As a religious creator, he takes the first rank. He was the original Calvinist, the spiritual father of Jeremiah, Paul, Augustine, Mohammed, Jonathan Edwards, and all that ilk. As Renan well says, "The ceiling of the San Sistine Chapel, with its tremendous pictures of the awful divine judge and the retributions of those who disobey his autocratic will, is the best illustration of this remarkable writer. Michael Angelo is the only artist who could interpret the Jahvist; for he is truly his brother in genius" (Renan, p. 302, vol. II).

In the author of the third great stratum we find a still different type of mind from either the preceding; a man of superior culture, employing a warm and persuasive eloquence; fond of stately periods; exhibiting a decidedly purer and higher tone, both ethically and religiously. The author of the patriarchal legends had, as we noticed, hardly got out of the shell of polytheism. The Jehovist was only in the stage of Monarcho-theism, revering Jehovah as the first among the gods. The Deuteronomist carries us on to the next stage,—not monotheism, but monolatry, in which, while the existence of other gods was still recognized, Jehovah was proclaimed the unique God, the sole object of worship, and thus did the world the inestimable service of providing the next higher step in the

staircase of religion, from which the second Isaiah, Jesus, and Paul mounted to that of a true monotheism, in which Jehovah was not merely the only God to be worshipped, but the only God in existence, the One over all, in all, and through all.

It was in the seventh century, shortly before or else in during the reign of Josiah, that the Deuteronomist wrote. For a long time it was thought that the next great contributor to this literary edifice added his notable fourth story, the priestly and legal part, about the same time. But, while there may have been many additions made at this time, the best critics, Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen, now put the date of this priestly reviser and the most of the sacerdotal legislation, including also the noble proem, the Creation Ode of the first chapter, as late as the time of the Babylonish captivity,—the fifth century, B. C. This accounts for the numerous reminiscences and readaptations of Assyrian legend that he has introduced and the absence of allusions to this priestly code in the prophets of the seventh and eighth centuries. This priestly reviser, sometimes called the first Elohist (because he usually speaks of the divine only under the name of Elohim down to the time when the revelation of God as Jahveh is made to Moses, in Exodus XII), was a native of the south,—probably a resident in Jerusalem. He possessed scientific tastes; had a fondness for genealogies, a more precise style; aimed to inculcate moral lessons and preserve the memory of religious customs; exhibited a mind more reflective and exact; sympathized with the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin; avoided as far as possible the

anthropomorphism of the northern narrators; and exhibits both a higher morality and a purer theism. He has encumbered his narrative, nevertheless, with a most wearisome and formal mass of ceremonial details. He is the ardent devotee of ecclesiastical theocracy, and has not hesitated, in his enthusiasm, to map out a whole priestly Utopia, an imposing air castle of sacerdotal laws, customs, events, and institutions, constructed with such precise and realistic details that for ages it was held to have been a veritable part of Hebrew history and experience.

And this suggests a few words upon the great gain which our conception of Hebrew history and the course of its literary development has made by this critical reconstruction of the proper succession of its various books and documents. What a travesty of the literary and religious history of India should we make if we presented it in the following order: first, the ceremonial legislation of Manu; next, the Vedic songs and myths; third, the subtle, speculative Upanishads; and lastly, the practical moral reforms and spiritual teachings! But it is just such a topsy-turvy picture of the course of Jewish faith and thought that the traditional view of the Old Testament has given us, putting its monotheism at the very beginning, supposing away back in the time of Moses a most minute and elaborate legislation and complicated, pedantic ritual system already full blown, and presenting this as succeeded by such an epoch of political and social chaos, such a period of crude morals and unregulated worship, and rude, almost savage legends as we find in Judges and Samuel, "when" as the

record says, " every one did what was good in his own eyes."

The history of literature and the science of comparative religion show us, in all the great civilizations of Europe and Asia, the same law of literary development, from the childlike to the reflective, from the simple to the complex; and also the same course of religious evolution, first rude nature-worship and fetichism, then, advance through idolatry and polytheism towards theism and spiritual religion. First we have the diviner and the soothsayer and the bard, the childlike chanter of primitive war-songs and myths, next the prophet, and after him the priest. Now, the traditional theory reverses this, and puts at the dawn of Hebrew life and literature that elaborate sacerdotalism which everywhere else comes only in the evening of the national life. But, when we study the Old Testament as literature under the microscope of the higher criticism, the intellectual and spiritual evolution of the Hebrew genius becomes again a natural one, exhibiting the same normal succession as the national consciousness of India, Egypt, Persia, and Greece. Thus a new orderliness is given to the Old Testament, and with it a greater intelligibleness.

And in another way also does the literary view of the Bible give it a clearer comprehensibility; namely by permitting us to use sources of illumination that on the traditional theory are at once ruled out. What new light is supplied for understanding the Genesis stories of the fall, the deluge, and the Tower of Babel, when we can illustrate them by their Assyrian analogues, if not sources? How much more intelligible

becomes the story of Samson, when we are free to recognize many of its distinctive features as derived from the primitive sun-myth, of which here we have a degraded survival, perhaps grafted upon some legendary stock! And, especially, what an illumination is given to Solomon's Song of Songs, which in our King James' version is so darkly obscured by the interpolated headings which refer it to a mystical marriage of Christ and the Church, when we accept it as a pastoral cantata, commemorating the fidelity of true love, unmoved by the blandishments of rank and luxury! Instead of its being a dialogue between two, we must suppose, as Ewald has shown in such a masterly manner, a chorus and at least three principal characters; namely, the Shulamite maiden, the shepherd lover to whom she has pledged her affection, and Solomon, the king, who, captivated with her beauty, has taken her from her native village to his magnificent palace, and who thinks that by the glittering prospect he opens before her, as his favorite, he may induce her to abandon her rustic home and betrothed husband. By her steadfast resistance to the king's solicitations the loyal maid, however, at last convinces Solomon of the hopelessness of his passion, and obtains permission to return to the shepherd lover whom she cannot forget; and at the close of the poem the faithful couple appear hand in hand, expressing in glowing strains the superiority of genuine affection, though in the humblest lot, over any union that riches or position may buy. This is a meaning that nobly vindicates the place which the Song of Songs has so strangely, but fortunately, retained in the sacred canon.

And this brings me to my final point, the increased value of the Old Testament,—the higher claim upon our admiration and our reverence that it gains when viewed as literature. All its natural beauties and excellences, of old so obscured by the artificial theories of its supernatural dictation, now emerge to delight us. What admirable character-painting is disclosed in the ingenious delineations of the three great patriarchs and their successors,—Joseph, Deborah, Samuel, Saul, David, and Elijah! How sharp, forceful, naïve and pathetic are these memorable personalities, outlined often with such few but graphic strokes of the pen! Surely, nowhere else than in Shakspere himself can we find such a wonderful portrait gallery of figures, so diversified and full of breathing life, as we find in the patriarchal legends of Genesis and the historic sketches of Judges, Samuel and Kings. Or, if we can disabuse ourselves of the inclination to look upon it as either science or revelation, and consider it only as poetry, what a splendid, inspiring ode have we in that Psalm of Creation that makes the first chapter of the Bible memorable! How superb the lyric strains of many of the Psalms! What a vigorous and copious exposition of the grandeurs of nature are given by them, especially by that 103d Psalm, which as Humboldt said, is "in itself an outline of the universe." What persuasive springs of consolation, what powerful ethical instruction, do the pages of the prophets furnish!

I know, of course, the many dark stains that mar the moral tone of the Old Testament, the grave inconsistencies of its spiritual teaching. When viewed as an infallible book, a web divinely woven, all of one

cloth, these stains are fatal to its claims. But, when we look upon it as the spiritual history of a nation feeling its way to God, it has no superior. It possesses certainly that best of inspiration, the power of inspiring and uplifting its readers. Take Conway's "Sacred Anthology" or Max Muller's fuller "Sacred Books of the East," and compare the other Oriental Scriptures with the Bible, and the more thoroughly you know the literature of the rest of the world, the more sure will you be that, on the whole, with all its crudities and coarseness and vengefulness on its head, the Bible stands far above all other scriptures in purity and elevation of tone. Grant that the vestiges of polygamy, slavery, idolatry, witch-burning, bloody revenges, and religious persecutions may be inbedded here, like the scales of hideous dragons of the slime in a slab of the Saurian period. Yet they are but the marks of the outgrown shells, the off-cast skins which the spiritual genius of Israel successively sloughed off, and left behind it. They are but the lower rounds of that heavenly ladder which the religious consciousness of the Hebrews one after another trod beneath it, and rose above, as it struggled slowly to the recognition and proclamation of the purest religious truths known to antiquity. All these relics of a lower stage of thought and conduct but bear witness to the naturalness and progressiveness of the religious evolution. Nowhere else in all literature is there a more striking and valuable panorama of the development of the spiritual consciousness of a nation. What pictures of spiritual heroism, standing undaunted against all odds; what wise counsels

to youth; what moving and uplifting outpourings of devout thankfulness; what manly denunciations of wrong and injustice; what appealing strains of penitence and devout trust; what comfort to the bereaved and support for the tempted beam from these pages, as the morning stars when they sing together in their Maker's honor, and make the benediction of this book, in spite of all its flaws, unparalleled in the history of humanity. And this benediction shall be all the greater, when those who profess to reverence its lustre shall no more "breathe on it, as they bow," but, freed from artificial tinsel and glamour, it shall shine forth in all its natural beauty, symmetry, and matchless worth.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP AND MODERN LIFE.

Some years ago there was published in England a striking story which gave the imaginary history of a young Cornish carpenter, Joshua Davidson by name, who takes all that he is taught in church and Sunday-school with entire literalness and endeavors to act accordingly.

He is assured that every word in the gospels is literally true; that every command and exhortation should be strictly obeyed; that every promise may be confidently relied upon; and that, as Christ is set forth as our pattern, He ought to be faithfully imitated.

Poor Joshua,—learning all this every Sunday and from every pulpit; and being moreover, peremptorily assured of it by his rector, when, in his dawning perplexities, he ventures to question that august functionary, resolves to shape his whole life, by the standard thus set up for him. Trusting in the text of Christ's promise to His disciples, he ate poisonous berries and nearly died in consequence. He handled serpents and was greatly astonished to find himself severely bitten by the vipers. And to the doctor who came to attend him, he talked so much primitive Christianity that the good man set him down as a lunatic. In fine, poor Joshua, merely by trying in all sincerity, to do on week days, what every Sabbath he was told our

pattern did, and he himself ought therefore to do, was forever getting into scrapes and being bullied by his teachers for really believing what they told him.

When he gets through school, he goes to London and seeks to lead there, an unflinching Christian life. He tries to reform a regular jail-bird, nearly gets involved in his iniquities and is publicly beaten by the ruffian.

He succeeds in rescuing a poor Magdalen, but he loses his own repute among his neighbors by taking her into his own house; the only place of refuge he knew of to offer her. He sets up a night school for the scamps and villains who swarm in the court where he lives; but they are so turbulent that the police arrest him as a harborer of disorderly characters.

Poor Joshua, finding his own little strength so unavailing to stem the seething tide of evil, comes to the conclusion that society itself must be revolutionized before Christianity can have any chance of being carried out in practice. He looks into his New Testament and finds that the early Christians had all things in common; and he leaps to the conclusion that Christianity requires the equalization of classes. Capital, the aristocracy of wealth and the antagonisms of upper and lower classes and class distinctions, constituted, he believed, the Upas tree that poisons Christendom; and he becomes an itinerant lecturer to rouse the masses to shake off these fetters and adopt socialistic principles; and at length goes to Paris and joins the Communists, fancying their communistic scheme the most hopeful attempt to work out the principles of Jesus. But even here, no happier lot

awaited him. The ruffians and fanatics of that awful travesty nearly tore him in pieces, because of his adherence to Christ; his faithful Magdalen was shot as an incendiary; and he himself on his return to England, was trampled to death by an enraged mob whom he was addressing, on the ground that he was a Communist, a republican and an atheist.

This tragic story puts in a striking light the opposition which I suppose, all have sometimes remarked, between much of our popular preaching and the conduct, actually current in society and required by it. It is a cutting satire upon the inconsistency, perhaps we might say, the cowardice or dishonesty of those who teach on the first day of the week that every word of the Bible is to be taken with a literalness with which we take no other book, and on the remaining six, act like the veriest unbeliever and heathen. Nay —it suggests a deeper question; it presses upon us the inquiry,—is Christianity indeed applicable to modern society and our existing civilization? Is it obligatory, or is it practicable, is it wise or right to obey and act out the precepts and examples of the gospel in this present year of our Lord? Or on the other hand is Christianity to be reckoned an obsolete law,—a beautiful tradition, to be kept like a rare cup of old china, high up on a shelf, admiringly to be gazed upon and reverenced, but never used in daily life?

It is easy to say of such a story—"It is an extravaganza. It presents difficulties that do not occur in daily life." This is certainly true. But nevertheless would it be an extravaganza, if Christians were true to their professions? Would its difficulties be inex-

perienced if the "Imitation of Christ" showed itself in living men and women in our streets, instead of in book covers on our tables or sermons in our pulpits?

Where is the Church member in the strictest of churches, who entirely imitates the examples of the New Testament? Where is he who will step on the sea, trusting to be sustained like Christ and Peter, by the power of faith? Where is the Christian who believes it to be his precise duty to call nothing his own, but to hold everything literally in common with all his brother Christians? Who to-day holds it to be his Christian duty, in simple truth, like the lilies, to toil not, neither to spin; or like the ravens, to sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns? Or if there are such Christians what does our modern science and political economy have to say to them? What, indeed, is the tone of current remark in Christian circles upon such proceedings? Doubtless many of these inconsistencies, (numbers of which will occur to every one) are not so much inconsistencies of modern life with the gospel requirements as with wrong interpretations which have been put upon Christianity. But deducting whatever incompatibilities may be traced to this source, there are enough still left, to leave quite a formidable problem. While, for example, He whom we call Master, promises His disciples that whatsoever they ask in His name shall be given to them,—physical science declares that every law of nature is absolutely unchangeable, and moves not to the most fervent prayer. While the New Testament bids us give to him that asketh and sell that which we have and give alms, our social science declares that alms-giving is preeminently noxious,

encouraging idleness and profligacy, and helping to saddle society with a brood of permanent parasitic mendicants. While the gospel bids us resist not evil, and to him that smites thee on the one cheek, turn the other also, the whole of our military, police and legal systems is a tacit repudiation of these precepts, and our political experience asserts that the order of our great civilized communities could not be maintained without repression of violence wherever it shows its unruly head. In short, many of the instructions of the New Testament are (to the common sense of the nineteenth century) incredible and impracticable paradoxes. Let a Christian disciple, nowadays try to act them out literally and simply. Let him for example essay to cast a mountain into the sea, simply by faith; let the missionary take no money in his purse nor shoes for his feet, when he starts on a journey, as the seventy were commanded by Christ to do; let the Christian literally pluck out the eye or cut off the right hand that is concerned in any sin of his; let him, when a member of his family is sick unto death, instead of calling in the doctor call in the church *elder* to pray over him and anoint his head with oil, as the Apostle James commands; and the doctors would be pretty likely to send him to the insane asylum.

Now, here are these unavoidable antagonisms between Christian duty, as the letter of Scripture gives it to us, and the usages and requirements of modern life. These antagonisms are becoming evident to great numbers, both among the strict disciples of Christ and among the ardent devotees of modern

progress. On the one hand, many earnest Christians are eager to bring the Christian world back to a literal acceptance and imitation of the gospel teachings, as the only cure for our troubles, and would turn their backs on modern society, as only Paganism, because of its variation from the pattern of ancient Palestinian life. A conspicuous instance of this is found in the recent writings of Count Tolstoi, the famous Russian author. Till middle life, an absolute skeptic and man of the world and bold assailant of authority, he, then, he said, made a great discovery. It was that the precepts of Jesus, especially such as "Resist not evil"; "Judge not" and "swear not at all" are to be taken with absolute literalness. This has now become "his religion" which he is enthusiastic in urging upon the world. Till we give up courts and law proceedings, armies, police and resistance to oppression, we are not, he claims, true Christians. On the other hand, there is the large and fast growing class of thoroughgoing rationalists and worshippers of science, to whom natural selection and evolution are the supreme words, and whose saints are Haeckel and Büchner, Comte and Bradlaugh and Ingersoll, who are more and more renouncing Christianity, because it is, they believe, irreconcilable with modern ideas and the laws of nature, discovered by physical science. Both these parties, from opposite quarters are pushing the mind of our generation more directly face to face with the question, "Which shall be given up,—Christian discipleship or modern thought and life?"

Which, then, of these two antagonistic inmates shall be turned out of our heart and mind?

Now, those who maintain the necessity of interpreting and following the gospel literally—if at all,—I leave to themselves to take whichever horn of the dilemma they choose. I leave it to them to choose between the literal gospel and their daily practice; between the punctilious copying of every act and the scrupulous observance of every word of Christ, on the one side and the whole network of modern institutions and the affirmations of modern thought and experience on the other. For myself, I would take a more excellent way. For I cannot spare,—modern life cannot spare either the gospel of Christ or the knowledge and civilization of the nineteenth century.

Nor are the two when rightly interpreted, inconsistent. Both should be kept; both may be harmonized through that higher interpretation which is the reasonable interpretation of Christianity.

The solution lies just here. The Christian life is not bound up with the letter of any book. The Christian life is no slavish imitation of any life. To live the life of Christ is not to live as He did, but as He would live to-day. The gospel is not a code of conduct out of which we are to pick out texts, here and there to go by; but it is a well-spring of spiritual influence with which we are first thoroughly to fill ourselves, and then, let our conduct flow freely therefrom.

In the first place our duty as Christians is not to follow the letter of the gospel, but the spirit. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life," is the profound admonition of Paul. He who follows the mere letter of the gospel may violate many of the most sacred

obligations of virtue. He may hold slaves and quote to us in justification Paul's letter to Philemon. He may practice polygamy and justify it by the practice of the patriarchs and the omission of any prohibition of it in the New Testament. Or he may (as a clergyman in England it is said, once advised a parishioner who inquired of him) look on bribery as no sin because nowhere expressly forbidden in the Bible. Of the letter of the New Testament we can never be as sure as of its spirit. We must remember that the gospels were not composed till forty to one hundred years after the events and discourses which they relate. We must remember that what was originally said has been twice translated;—first from Hebrew into Greek, and then from Greek into English. Especially we must remember that Jesus was an Oriental and a popular teacher. There is more in these two facts than we are apt to allow for. The Asiatic style of narration is so different in its tone from the European, especially so different from our prosaic Anglo-Saxon that we are almost sure to be misled. What we would express abstractly, the Oriental loves to put concretely. What we would say in cautious and measured terms, the Eastern tongue adorns with luxuriant garlands of imagery and hyperbole. Athanase Coquerel, the eminent French preacher, has given a couple of good illustrations of this. "When I was in the East I visited a sheik's house. He told me that every thing in that house, his own person and his own family as well as his possessions were mine;—and he said this with the greatest protestations. This is exactly as if we should say to a stranger, 'You are

welcome'—it means no more. If I had understood it to mean any more and on going away had taken anything with me, the sheik would have shot me as a thief."

"I remember," also says Coquerel, "having seen two letters,—one written by a French General, the other by Abd-El-Kadir, the Arab chief who fought the French in Algeria. It had been decided that the French general and the Arab chief should say exactly the same thing in regard to some exchange of prisoners. The French general wrote two lines;—very clear, very precise, with nothing but the exact meaning he intended to convey. But Abd-El-Kadir, meaning to write the same thing, wrote a whole page about flowers, jewels, roses, moonshine and what not."

Now this difference between the poetic genius of Oriental expression and the precision which the European mind expects, must not be overlooked, and it necessitates a certain reduction in interpreting many of the strong declarations of the New Testament.

Again, as I hinted, we must remember that Jesus was a speaker to the multitude. We must disabuse our minds of that old idea that Jesus spoke primarily to report from heaven to earth a body of Divinity and a perfect moral code, exact and exhaustive, every syllable weighed and measured so as to be a standard authority and sacred oracle for all future generations. We must think of him rather as aiming to fix the attention of the lounging crowd, gathered at some street corner or public square in Jerusalem; or to rouse from their sluggishness the minds of the rustics who have come out on to some hilltop or by the lake-side

to take a look at the new preacher. If he had spoken in the cautious, moderate and qualified style of a theological professor, he would never have caught their attention. Jesus was obliged, from the nature of the case, to resort to striking apothegms,—nay to what literally would be paradoxes, that he might lodge something in their minds that would quicken them and set them to thinking. Doubtless, too, he was aware of and made allowance for that curious hold-back in human nature, that unwillingness that the average man feels, to do in any matter exactly what another man counsels him to do. Tell a boy to do one particular thing and how willing you find him to do anything else but that; and if at last, he yields and does do the thing he has been ordered to,—how apt he is to do it in some way just a little different from the way he has been commanded to do it. He seems to think that by so varying from the order given him, he in some way saves his own independence. And men are only boys of bigger growth and show the same trait by always trying to beat down their market man or get ten per cent. off the price of their coal or their potatoes. There is this eternal tendency in human nature to do a little less than it is wanted to, so that if you want to get the world a rod ahead, you must command it to go a furlong. John Stuart Mill in his autobiography, speaking of one of his pamphlets, "England and Ireland," says,—"It is the character of the British people, or at least of the higher and middle classes who pass muster for the British people, that to induce them to approve of any change, it is necessary that they should look upon it as a

middle course. They think any proposal extreme and violent, unless they hear of some other proposal going still further, upon which their antipathy to extreme views may discharge itself. So it proved in the present instance. My proposal was condemned. But any scheme for Irish land reform, short of mine, came to be thought moderate by comparison.' It was on this principle, also, so I have heard Wendell Phillips say, that he and the early Abolitionists urged the people of the North to dissolve the Union so as to get rid of the responsibility for slavery. They persuaded hardly any one to go that length with them. They did not expect to. But by urging that extreme, they brought people up to saying, " We cannot consent to give up the constitution and the Union; but anything short of that:—free territories, personal liberty bills; colored schools,—in anything of this sort we will support you. And the very people gladly promised this, who, if we had asked only for these lesser things would have been just as unwilling to yield them."

Now Jesus, I believe, understood this trait of human nature, and made it serve him; and it is the explanation of many of the apparent paradoxes of the gospel. If he had simply bidden men, when struck on the cheek, bear it with patience, he would have made very slight impression on their minds and his admonition would have accomplished little or nothing. But by bidding them " turn the other cheek, also,"—he arrests men's thoughts and gets them half-way to the goal he has bidden them to go; to the point, that is, of recognizing it as a duty to bear injuries patiently, which was probably in fact all that Jesus desired. So with

the precept enjoining the disciple to go "two miles with him that ask thee to go one;" to "give up thy coat, also, to him that takes thy cloak;"—if we follow these precepts to the extent that common sense and a just regard for our other duties limits them, we may feel that we are following them as far as Jesus expected us to. Every other excellence seems to be ascribed to Jesus except this attribute of common sense. But he who was the perfection of manhood, surely was not lacking in the one thing most essential to wisdom and balance of character. And as he had common sense himself, he expected to find it in those to whom he spoke.

Again, we must distinguish between the circumstances of the age and country in which Christ lived and our own. He spoke,—in the form of his instruction,—for his own time. Were he teaching now among us, the form, the details of his instruction would doubtless be different. For example, among a simple rustic community, like that of Palestine, there was not the same danger of breeding a pauper class by the custom of alms-giving, as with us. It was the natural way of relieving honest distress. So wealth was less often won without fraud or extortion, in those days. It spoke generally of injustice and oppression. It did not play, in the economy of Christ's people, that useful place in the development and improvement of society that it does in modern life. The social science of Palestine would hardly be the same as that which England and America call for, to-day. The practical methods that may have been wise in Galilee, 1,800 years ago, may not be so at all in modern Christendom. We must not confound the

realm of the spiritual with the realm of the material. Christianity has no particular system of political economy. Christianity has no special system of transacting business. Christianity has no unchangeable specifications of dogma or conduct, the line of which it always requires its disciples to toe. It is not a set of rules and precepts, but of principles. It is a grand stream of vital spirit, flowing from the heart of Christ, down through the centuries, infusing all institutions and customs, while it expands itself to the breadth of the advancing age. Christianity is, indeed, a religion of every-day life; a religion of business; a religion that embodies itself in social activities. But it has nowhere any special institutions, any special forms; any special acts or instrumentalities that it insists upon. What it insists on is the feeling, the motive that is carried into all. That must always be high and pure. Every sentiment of the Christian must be noble. Every purpose must be unselfish. Every beat of his heart must remember his neighbor's good. Every thought must be touched with a reverence for the Divine. Let the intellect seek what path it thinks best. Only let the generous heart be the driver. Let common sense conduct the affairs of society and the state as she deems wisest. Only let love to God and man be the end. Of every special deed, true Christianity says, as Paul said of the eating of meat,—"Let him that eateth, eat unto the Lord, and him that eateth not, likewise unto the Lord. To his own Master, he standeth or falleth." Christ is indeed, the pattern which our religious aspirations should set before them. But we cannot repeat all the actual

deeds or ideas of Christ to advantage in this nineteenth century, any more than we can wisely wear in our northern climes, the loose, thin robes that Jesus wore; or use sandals on our feet, instead of shoes; or talk Aramaic, as Christ did; or image in our own faces, the personal likeness that belonged to him. What we are to seek is that which Paul exhorted the Philippians to attain to; "the mind which was in Christ Jesus"; that spirit, temper, enduring and inspiring character—that life, in fine, "which shone" as Mr. W. R. Greg has well said, "through all his actions and permeated all his sayings, and which was so vital, so essential, so omnipresent and so unmistakable, as to have survived through all the channels and processes of transmission,—this mind of Christ can alone be safely followed as his real teaching. Doubts and disputes among Christians have been endless as to the doctrine of Christ; as to the particulars of what he said and did. None, we believe, ever truly differed as to the tone and temper of his mind or of his teaching." We may doubt the wisdom and the obligation still to obey some of Christ's verbal commands. We may declare that he who gives to every one that asks of him, will be likely only to minister to sloth and sensuality; that he who turns the other cheek, also, to the fist that has already smitten him on one cheek, only encourages the riot of violence and force. But we cannot dispute that the spirit that these precepts inculcate is the right spirit; that this mood of universal, all-forbearing love is the only mood that can bring the fallen soul to its better self; is the only mood in which even stern correction should be inflicted.

To have "the mind that was in Christ Jesus" is the true Christian life. And that life is always feasible. We cannot conceive any single form or manifestation of it that may not thrive in fullest vitality in society as now constituted, and find ample work in purging it of its evils and developing its capabilities, without seeking to overturn its foundations. "The shell of verbal form," Mr. Greg has truly said, "in which Christ's thoughts have come down to us, may pass from the belief of man and from harmony with society. The world has outgrown some; it will, doubtless, outgrow more. But the kernel,—the spirit,—belongs to all time." To follow this spirit is, of course, a work beset with difficulties,—as all things worth getting are. And some of these difficulties, come, it is true, from the very spirit of our age. To lead a life that shall make our fellow-men better is not the simple thing it was of old. It is beset with many perplexities. Our civilization is so complex that it is a difficult thing to follow out the windings of an act to its real consequences in society. It is a difficult thing to balance the two sides that we have learned to see that there are to almost every question. The Christian disciple nowadays needs the wisdom of the serpent, or in spite of himself, he will fail to be "harmless as the dove." But if there are these hindrances to Christian living, in modern society,—on the other hand what great helps are there! There has never been a time, I believe, more full of the Christian spirit. Never a time when men sought more generally and more patiently how they might improve the condition of society. Never a time when

there was a more earnest desire to get at the real, at the substantial, the actually helpful,—pushing one side old worn out forms, perhaps with a little rudeness, but with diligence and intelligence advancing towards that which is truly useful to the race. Look around at our public institutions, our hospitals, asylums, Social Science Associations, Reform Schools, Fresh Air Funds and Outings, Free Kindergartens, Lend-a-Hand Societies, People's Palaces, College Settlements, Peace Conferences, Working People's Clubs, and what grand strides have been made within the last century towards the better realization of the coming of Christ's kingdom of love and peace on earth. But still—how far, alas! are we yet, from the glorious consummation. God knows how much we fall short of it. But the fault, I believe, lies not in the age; nor in our institutions, nor yet in the gospel itself. It lies in ourselves; in the pressure of the senses upon the spirit; the rivalry of the flesh with the soul; the weariness of the body and the weakness of the will. Let us seek to get more of the mind which was in Christ; that absolute devotion to our fellow-men and to God. Let us not squander our forces, endeavoring to overturn society. Let us trust that the experience and struggle for existence of humanity in these many thousand years that we have been on the earth, have settled some of the simpler conditions of social life. Let the sword go unmelted; but let it strike only for right and justice. Despise not the power of riches; but let them be used for the blessing of society. Let the distinctions of property and class remain. But let them be consecrated to the discharge of their respect-

ive duties, and to the better fulfilment of what mutual love and helpfulness demands. It is a fascinating vision,—the vision of the days of primitive Christianity renewed amongst us; the very life of Jesus in Nazareth and Jerusalem, led again here, just as he passed it there. But that time is gone by forever. Yet that which is left to us; the realizing of his mind in every one of our lives,—taking on the new forms which our larger opportunities and larger experience justify, how much nobler a picture would that make! Would it not, indeed, be the realization of those greater miracles which Christ himself foretold that his disciples should work when his own task on earth was ended?

CHAPTER VIII.

MODERN DOGMATISM AND THE UNBELIEF OF THE AGE.

An eminent ecclesiastic of the Church of England once characterized the present age as preeminently the age of doubt, and lamented that whether he took up book or magazine or sermon, he was confronted by some form of it.

This picture of our age is not an unjust one. The modern mind is thoroughly wide-awake and has quite thrown off the leading strings of ancient timidity. All the traditions of history, the laws of science, the principles of morals are overhauled and the foundations on which they rest relentlessly probed. And our modern curiosity can see no reason why it should cease its investigations when it comes to the frontiers of religion. It deems no dogma too old to be summoned before its bar; no council nor conclave too sacred to be asked for its credentials; no pope or scripture too venerable to be put in the witness-box and cross-examined as to its accuracy or authority. In all the churches there is a spirit of inquiry abroad, —nay, almost every morning breeze brings us some new report of heresy, or the baying of the sleuth-hounds, as they scent some new trail of heterodoxy; and the slogan of dogmatic controversy echoes from shore to shore.

To the greater part of the church this epidemic of

scepticism is a subject of grave alarm. Unbelief seems to them, as to Mr. Moody, the worst of sins; and they consider the only proper thing to do with it, is to follow the advice which the Bishop of London gave some years ago,—and fling doubt away as you would a loaded shell. They apparently look upon Christianity as a huge powder magazine, which is likely to explode if a spark of candid inquiry comes near it.

Others on the contrary, fold their arms indifferently and regard this new spirit of investigation as only an evanescent breeze, which can produce no serious result upon the citadel of faith. A third party hails it with exultation as the first trumpet blast of the theological Götterdämerung,—the downfall of all divine powers and the destruction of the Christian superstition to give place to the naked facts of scientific materialism.

What estimate then, shall we put on this tendency?

In the first place we must recognize that it is a serious condition; that it is no momentary eddy, but a permanent turn in the current of the human mind. Humanity is looking religion square in the face, without any bandage over the eyes, in a way it never has confronted it before; and when humanity once gets its eyes open to such questions,—it is in vain to try and close them, before it has thoroughly examined the subjects at issue. Certainly, Protestantism cannot call a halt upon this march. For it was Protestantism itself, proclaiming at the beginning of her struggle with Rome, the right of private judgment, which started the modern mind upon this high quest; and

Protestantism is therefore bound, in logic and honor, to see it through to the end, whatever that end may be.

And in the next place I believe that quest will end in good. Why the champions of faith should regard doubt as devil-born, rather than a providential instrument in God's hand, is something I do not understand. If doubt humbles the church and acts as a thorn in its flesh, may not such chastening be providential, quite as much as the things which puff it up. As Luther well expressed it:—"We say to our Lord—that if He will have His church, He must keep it. For we cannot. And if we could, we should be the proudest asses under heaven." As Attila was the scourge of God to the Roman world, when God needed to clear that empire out of the way, as He built His new christendom,—so may not doubt be the scourge of God to this easy-going, sleepy, too credulous piety of to-day which swallows all the husks of faith so fast that it never gets a taste of the kernel?

Yes, doubt is often the needed preparation for obtaining truth. We must clear out the thorny thicket of superstition before we can begin to raise the sweet fruit of true religion. There are times when careful investigation is rightly called for. When doubting Thomas demanded to see the point of the nails and to touch and handle the flesh of the risen Christ, before he would believe in the resurrection of his Lord, his demand for the most solid proof of the great marvel was a wise and commendable one,—one for which all subsequent generations of Christians are deeply indebted to him. To believe without evidence,

or to suppress doubt where it legitimately arises, is both fostering superstition and exposing ourselves to error and danger. What shall we say of the merchant who refuses to entertain any question about the seaworthiness of his vessel, but sends her off across the Atlantic, undocked and unexamined, piously trusting her to the Lord? Shall we commend him? or not rather charge him with culpable negligence? And what we say of such a merchant, seems to me just what we should say of the Christian who refuses to investigate the seaworthiness of that ship of faith which his ancestors have left him. In astronomy, in politics, in law, we demand what business the dead hand of the past has on our lip, our brain, our purse? Why should the dead hand of Anselm, Augustine or Calvin be exempt from giving its authority? Why should their mediæval glimpses of truth be given the right to close our eyes to-day from seeing what we ourselves can see and seal our lips from speaking forth what we can hear of heavenly truth?

In all other departments of knowledge, investigation has brought us to a higher outlook, where we see the true relations of things better than before. In all other branches, God has given us new light, so that we discern things more as they really are. Science has risen, by making a ladder of its earlier errors and by treading them under foot, has reached to higher truths. The Bible itself is the growth of ages; and Christian doctrine and Christian creeds have been the evolution of a still longer period. The dogmas of the churches are most manifold and conflicting. Is it not rather immodest and absurd for each church to claim

infallibility for its present creed and that wisdom died when the book of Revelation closed the Bible, or the Council of Trent or the Westminster Assembly adjourned its sitting? It seems to me that the churches ought, instead, to be willing and anxious to receive whatever new light God may grant them to-day, and with the potent clarifying processes of reason, separate the pure gold of religion from the dross and alloys of olden superstition and misguided judgment.

But to the modern devotees of dogma any subjection of it to the cleansing of the reason seems shocking. What, *e. g.*, was the forefront of the offending of Robert Ingersoll, on account of which so large a part of the religious world considered him an infidel, sure to be eternally lost, than that he dared to test the Bible and popular creeds by reason and freely vent his matchless wit, irony and indignant eloquence on those parts and interpretations that would not meet the test. Or in the case of another heretic of our day —a man of most reverent spirit and thorough scholarship—never scoffing at sacred things as Colonel Ingersoll did—yet on whose trail the heresy-hunters long fiercely followed—for what was Dr. Charles A. Briggs tried and suspended from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. And when for the sake of peace, he left that denomination and sought in its stead the fold of Episcopacy, for what was he still pursued with much loud sacerdotal baying and barking? Why else than that he frankly admitted errors in the Bible and gave to reason (by which he meant, as he explained, not merely the understanding but also the conscience and

religious instinct in man) a conjoint place with the Bible and the Church in the work of salvation and the attainment of divine truth?

To the modern dogmatist, these positions seem sceptical and pernicious. But to the philosopher, who knows the laws of human nature and to every scholar who knows the actual history of the Bible, these positions seem only self-evident. That in the scriptures there are innumerable errors in science, mistakes in history, prophecies that were never fulfilled, contradictions and inconsistencies between different books and chapters—these are facts of observation, which every Biblical student knows full well. And another thing every scholar knows equally well—that these original autographs of the sacred writers,—for whose infallibility the conservatives contend,—are things that no one in these modern days has ever seen or can ever know what they are. For the oldest of the New Testament Greek manuscripts is 200 years later than the age of the evangelists and the oldest Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament is 700 or 800 years older than the date of composition of their latest part. Granting, then, for the sake of argument, that the Bible was given originally by infallible divine dictation, yet the men who wrote down the message were fallible; the men who copied it were fallible; the men who translated it (some of it being twice translated,—first from Hebrew to Greek and then from Greek to English) were fallible; and the editors who from the scores of manuscripts, by their personal comparison and decisions between the conflicting readings, patched together our present text, were most fallible. And

when thus a Bible reader has got his text before him, how can he understand it except by using his own reason and judgment,—instruments again, most fallible.

How is it possible then, to get Bible-truth independently of the reason or in entire exemption from error? The only way would be to say that not only was the original manuscript of the Bible verbally inspired; but all its authors, copyists, editors and pious readers were also infallibly inspired. As, in the old Hindu account of how the world was supported, the earth was said to be held up on pillars, and the pillars on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, and when the defender of the faith was asked—"what then did the tortoise rest on?" he sought to save himself in his quandary by roundly asserting that it was "tortoise all the way down"; so the defender of the infallibility of the scripture has to take refuge in "inspiration all the way down." But if this be so,—ought not the modern Biblical editors and revisers, translators and professors of to-day also to be inspired, as much as those of King James' day or the printers at the Bible House? and thus we reach, as the *reductio ad absurdum* of this argument, the result that Tischendorf and Kuenen, Gregory and Dr. Briggs, Dr. Preserved Smith and Dr. McGiffert, the very Hebrew professors and higher critics who are accused of heresy, are really themselves the channels of infallible inspiration. For unless these Biblical scholars of the present day are inspired and providentially guided, a most essential link in the chain of inspiration is missing.

The sincere investigators into the character of the Bible and the nature of Christ are charged with ex-

alting human reason above the word of God. But as soon as the subject is investigated and a Professor Swing or a Dr. McGiffert corroborates his interpretation by the scripture itself, or Dr. Briggs and Professor Smith show their views to be sustained by history, by philosophy, by a profounder study of both nature and the Bible,—then, the ground is shifted and it is maintained that it is not a question whether the views are true; but whether they conform to the creed; that the catechism is not to be judged by the Bible or the facts in the case; but Bible and facts are to be interpreted by the words of the confession; and if they do not agree with this,—then, heresy and infidelity are made manifest. The question is not whether the water of truth be found; but whether it is drunk out of an orthodox bottle, with the Church's label glued firmly upon it.

But let us stop for a moment and ask whence came these creeds and catechisms themselves? What else was their origin than out of the reason of man, out of the brains of scholars, (quite as fallible, quite as partisan and far less well-informed than our scholars today) as these older scholars in former years, criticized and interpreted the same scripture and nature and laws of God.

Thus it is the dogmatists themselves who, in point of fact, exalt the reason of man above the word of God, forbidding us, as they do, to listen to the voice of God in our own soul; forbidding us to decipher the revelations which the Divine Hand has written on the rocks and trees and animal structures of his own Creation, and even frowning upon that profounder study of the

scripture called the higher criticism; and bid us accept, in its stead, the man-made substitute of some council or assembly of former generations, less well-informed than ourselves.

There have undoubtedly been periods when the doubt with which the church had to deal was mainly frivolous or sensual; a passionate rebellion of the carnal nature, attacking the essential truths of religion. But such is not the nature of the doubt that is at present occupying the public eye; such is not the doubt most characteristic of our generation. It proceeds from serious motives. It is a doubt marked by essential reverence and loyalty to truth. It is a desire for more solid foundations; for the attainment of the naked realities of existence. It is a necessary incident of the great intellectual awakening of our century. As the modern intellect comes back on Sunday from its week-day explorations of the history of Rome or the myths of Greece or the religious ideas of Buddha or Zoroaster, it must return to the contemplation of the Christian dogmas under the influence of new ideas. It will necessarily demand what better evidence the law of Moses or the creed of Athanasius has than the law of Manu or the text of the Zendavesta. The scepticism of our age is not so much directed against the great truths of religion as against the man-made dogmas that have usurped the sacred seat.

If irreverent, scoffing scepticism were to be found anywhere to-day, it would most likely be found manifested among the throng of young men gathered at our most progressive universities. But eminent men connected with orthodox denominations have testified

that if these students are sceptical, it is because they are too serious-minded and too true, to accept convictions ready-made; to take traditional creeds instead of personal beliefs; or church formularies in place of a life of devotion.

Now, to call such a state of mind irreligious or infidel is most unjust. The irreligion lies rather with those who make a fetish of the Bible and substitute a few pet texts from it, that sustain their own private opinions, in place of that divine light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The real infidels are they who reject the revelation which God is making us continually in the widening light of modern knowledge, and by a species of ecclesiastical lynching, condemn before trial the sincere, painstaking and careful scholars and reverent disciples of Christ, who are so earnestly seeking after truth,—because the results of their learned researches do not agree with the prejudices of their anathematizers. It is with no less cogency of argument than nobility of feeling that Dr. Briggs replied to his assailants: "If it be heresy to say that rationalists like Martineau have found God in the reason, and Roman Catholics like Newman, have found God in the church,—I rejoice in such heresy and I do not hesitate to say that I have less doubt of the salvation of Martineau and Newman than I have of the modern Pharisees who would exclude such noble men,—so pure, so grand, the ornaments of Great Britain and the prophets of the age,—from the kingdom of God."

Scepticism and religious questioning are, then, no sins. They are not irreligious. But surely they do

vex the church. What shall the church do about them.

In the first place we should not try to suppress them. Nor should we tell religious inquirers to shut their eyes and put the poppy pillow of faith beneath their heads and go to sleep again and dream. They have got their eyes wide open and they are determined to know whether those sweet visions which they had on faith's pillow are any more than illusions. Nor will they be satisfied and cease to think, by having a creed of 300 or 1,500 years antiquity recited to them. The modern intellects that have taken Homer to pieces, disinterred Agamemnon's tomb, unwound the mummy wrappings of the Pharaohs, weighed the stars and chained the lightnings are not to be awed by any old-time sheepskin or any council of bishops. They demand the facts in the case; they desire fresh manna to satisfy their heart hunger; they crave the solid realities of personal experience. It is too late to-day to say to the great tide of modern thought—"Thus far shalt thou go and no further." The old ramparts are broken through and we must give the flood its course. The only spirit to meet it in, is that of frankness and friendliness. Let us not foster in these questioning minds the suspicion that there is any part of religion that we are afraid to have examined. We smile at the bigoted Buddhist who, when the European attempted to prove by the microscope that the monk's scruples against eating animal food were futile (inasmuch as, as in every glass of water which he drank, he swallowed millions of little living creatures) smashed the microscope for answer—just as if that altered at

all the facts. But are not many of the heresy-hunters in Christendom quite as foolish, in their efforts to suppress the testimony which nature and reason and scholarship every day present afresh?

Let us therefore give liberty,—yes—even sympathy to these perplexed souls who are struggling with the great problems of religion.

And secondly, let us be honest with them and not claim more certainty for religious doctrines or more precise and absolute knowledge about divine and heavenly things than we have. One of the great causes of modern doubt is unquestionably the excessive claims that theology has made. It has not been content with preaching the simple truths necessary to a good life; that we have a Maker to whom we are responsible, a Divine Friend to help us, a Divine voice within to teach us right and wrong; that in the life that is to follow this, each shall be judged according to his deeds, and that in the examples of the Apostles and prophets, especially in the spotless life of Jesus, we have the noble patterns of the holy life set up before us for our imitation; a revelation of moral and religious truth all sufficient for salvation. The church has not been content with these, almost self-evident truths; but it must go on, to make most absolute assertions about God's foreknowledge and foreordination and Triune personality; and the eternal punishment of the wicked, and the double nature and preexistence of Christ, things not only vague and inconsistent, but contradictory to our sense of justice and right. It must go on to make manifold assertions about the inerrancy and verbal inspiration of the

Bible and the details of the future life and the fall of human nature, which are utterly incredible to rational minds. And the worst of it is, that all these things are bound up in one great theological system, and poor, anxious inquirers are told that they must either take all, or none; and so (soon coming face to face with some palpable inconsistency or incredibility) they not unnaturally give up the whole. Trace out the religious history of the great sceptics, the Voltaires, the Bradlaughs, the Ingersolls, the Tom Paines, and you will see that the origin of their scepticism has almost always been in a reaction from the excessive assumptions of the ecclesiastics themselves. It is too *fine-spun and arrogant orthodoxy* that is itself responsible for half of the *heterodoxy* of which it complains. Let the church, then, be candid and claim no more than it ought to. Let it respect and encourage honesty in every man in these sacred matters. The church itself should say to the inquirer: you are unfaithful to your God, if you go not where He, by the candle of the Lord,—*i. e.*, (the reason and conscience He has placed within you) leads you. And when a man in this reverent and sincere spirit, pursues the path of doubt, how often does he find it circling around again towards faith and conducting him to the Mount of Zion. The true remedy for scepticism is deeper investigation. As all sincere doubt is at bottom a cry of the deeper faith, that only that which is true and righteous is Divine, so all earnest doubt, thought through to the end, pierces the dark cloud and comes out in the light and joy of higher convictions. It lays in the dust our philosophic and

materialistic idols and brings us to the one eternal Power, the everlasting Spirit, manifested in all; that Spirit "whose name is truth, whose word is love."

The reader may perhaps remember the story of the climber among the Alps, who having slipped off a precipice, as he thought, frantically grasped, as he fell, a projecting root and held on in an agony of anticipated death, for hours, until, utterly exhausted, he at last resigned himself to destruction, and let go of his support, to fall gently on the grassy ledge beneath, only a few inches below his feet. So, when we resign ourselves to God's hand, our fall, be it little or be it great, lands us gently in the Everlasting Arms that are ever underneath.

Do not fear, then, to wrestle with doubt; or to follow its leadings. Out of every sincere soul struggle, your faith shall come forth, stronger and calmer. And do not hesitate to proclaim your new convictions, when they have become convictions. Such is the encouragement and sympathy that the church should give the candid questioner.

On the other hand, it may wisely caution him, not to be precipitate, in publishing his doubt. Let him wait until it has become more than a doubt; till it has become a settled and well-considered conclusion, before he inflicts it upon his neighbor. The very justification for doubting the accepted opinion, the sacredness of truth, —commands caution and firm conviction that our new view is something more than a passing caprice of the mind, before we publish it. But when the doubter is sure of this,—then, let him no longer silence his highest thoughts.

Again, the church is justified in cautioning the doubter not to be proud of his doubt as a doubt. There is no more merit, it is well to remember, in disbelieving than in believing; and if your opinions have, as yet, only got to the negative state and you have no new positive faith or philosophy to substitute for the old,—you are doing your neighbor a poor service in taking away from him any superstition, however illogical, that sustains his heart and strengthens his virtue.

And further, let me say,—I should dislike very much to have any sceptic contented with doubt. Doubt makes a very good spade to turn up the ground; but a very poor kind of spiritual food for a daily diet. It is a useful, often an indispensable half-way house in the journey of life; but a very cold home in which to settle down in, as the end of that journey.

In all our deepest hours, when our heart is truly touched or our mind satisfied,—we believe. It is each soul's positive faith, however unconventional or perhaps unconscious that faith may be, that sustains its hope, that incites its effort and that supports it through the trials of life. Any doubt, even, that is earnest and to be respected, is really an act of faith,—faith in a higher law than that of human creeds, faith in a more direct revelation, within ourselves, in our own sense of justice and consistency, than is to be found in any manuscript or print.

The very Atheist who in the name of truth, repudiates the word of God, is really manifesting (in his own different way) the belief which he cannot escape, in

the Divine Righteousness and its lawful claim on every human soul. She was right who wrote:

> "There is no unbelief.
> And day by day and night by night, unconsciously,
> The heart lives by that faith the lips deny;—
> God knows the why."

Finally—and most important of all—let us not worry ourselves so much about the intellectual opinions of men; but look rather to their spiritual condition. The Church ought to think less of creed and more of character. The essence of faith lies not in correct conclusions upon doctrinal points; but in righteousness and love and trustful submission to God's will. No scepticism concerning dogmas touches the heart of religion. If that seems at all heretical, let me cite good Orthodox authority. I might quote Bishop Thirlwall of the Church of England, in his judgment concerning Colenso's attack upon the accuracy of the history of the Exodus in the Pentateuch, —that "this story,—nay the whole history of the Jewish people, has no more to do with our faith as Christians, than the extraction of the cube or the rule of three." Or I might quote Canon Farrar's weighty words in an article upon the true test of religion. "The real question," he declares, "to ask about any form of religious belief, is: Does it kindle the fire of love? Does it make the life stronger, sweeter, purer, nobler? Does it run through the whole society like a cleansing flame, burning up that which is mean and base, selfish and impure? If it stands that test it is no heresy." That answers the question as aptly as it

does manfully. And to the same effect is that notable saying of Dr. McIlvaine at the Presbyterian Presbytery a few years ago, when, quoting the admission of one evangelical minister that it was the Unitarian Martineau who had saved his soul and kept his Christian faith from shipwreck, he added significantly, "you must first find God in your soul before you can find Him elsewhere." Yes—the prime and essential thing is to find God in the soul; to worship Him in spirit; by a pure conscience; by a loyal will; by a heart full of devotion to God's righteousness, and by love to all our kind. This is to worship God in truth. And what have Calvin's Five points or the composite or non-composite origin of the Pentateuch, or the virgin birth of Christ to do, with such worship? If a man finds evidence for them, which seems to him satisfactory; very well. But if he cannot honestly credit them,—why should we shut the doors of the Church against him or threaten him with excommunication? Were these the requirements that Jesus Christ laid on his disciples? Not at all. Look all through the Sermon on the Mount,—study the Golden Rule, and the Parable of the Good Samaritan, or the conditions he lays down in his picture of the Last Judgment as the conditions of approval by the Heavenly Judge, and see if you find anything there about the infallibility of scripture or the Apostolic succession or the Deity of Christ or any other of the dogmas on account of which the ecclesiastical disciplinarians would drive out the men whom they are pursuing as heretics. How grimly we may fancy Satan (if there be any Satan) smiling to himself as he sees great Christian

denominations wrought up to a white heat over such dogmas and definitions, while the practical atheism and pauperism and immorality of our great metropolis is passed over with indifference. Sunday after Sunday, the Christian pulpit complains that the great masses of the people keep away from their communion tables and do not even darken their doors. Does not the fault really lie in the folly—I may almost say the sin of demanding of men that they believe so many things that neither reason nor enlightened moral sense can accept, and making of these dogmas, five barred gates through which alone there is any admission to heaven? If we wish the Church to regain its hold on thinking men it must simplify and curtail its creeds; it must recognize that the love of God is not measured by the narrowness of human prejudice and that God's arms are open to receive every honest searcher after truth. Let him come with all his doubts; provided he come with a pure heart and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Let us no longer pretend that it is necessary for a Christian life to know all the mysteries of God. Let it no longer be thought a mark of wickedness for a man honestly to hold a conviction different from the conventional standard; but let us respect one another's independent search and judgment of truth. True faith consists not in any special theory of God or His ways, but in the uplifting of our spirit to touch His spirit and the diffusing of whatever grace or gift we have received from Him, in generous good will amongst our fellows. If the Christian Church is to go forward successfully again in the power and spirit of that Master whom it constantly invokes as

"the way; the truth and the life"; it must make that way and life its guiding truth. It must aim constantly at greater simplicity in its teaching, and a broader, more fraternal cooperation in Christian work. Its motto should be the motto of the early Church—"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things,—charity." Then shall a new and grander career open before its upward footsteps.

CHAPTER IX.

UNION OF THE CHURCHES IN ONE SPIRITUAL HOUSEHOLD.

FAIREST of the dreams of early Christianity was the dream of a single household of God, where all the children of the Heavenly Father, of whatever race or tongue, should be brought together into one great family, in the bond of mutual love and a common worship. It was the prayer of Jesus, in that last tender hour with His disciples before His arrest. It was the vision that inspired Paul to such heroic labors; it was the aspiring flame that rose up from the hearts of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, to call down on them the Holy Spirit, in whose solvent of loving sympathy Parthians and Medes, Elamites, Jews and Arabians, all understood their neighbor as if each spake in his own tongue. From century to century, indeed, the realization of this dream has, from causes too numerous to mention, constantly eluded the world. Still the dream has kept its hold on the human heart, and many brave attempts have been made to give it earthly incarnation. The new spirit of brotherhood which Jesus communicated has worked as a blessed leaven; and loud as the clash of Babel voices has been at times, yet the still small voice of human fellowship has kept whispering its counsels of love and peace. Those who note the ebb and flow of religious currents, have observed all

through the last quarter century a great rising in this tide; and, in the great religious assemblies connected with the World's Fair at Chicago, the attendance and speakers at which came from the most distant quarters of the globe, that tide of common spiritual sympathy rose to a height never before chronicled in history.

Unprecedented in size and material, and artistic magnificence, as the Chicago Exposition was, it was still more unprecedented and remarkable in its astonishing Parliament of Religions. To get together on the same platform Trinitarian and Unitarian, Monotheists and Polytheists, Roman cardinals and Free Religious Lecturers, Greek archbishops and Protestant presbyters, Buddhist monks and Confucian moralists, expounders of the Bible, the Koran and the Avesta, was indeed a marvel. But when from the lips of these representatives of diverse sects, whose ancestors had persecuted and cursed and battled with one another so bitterly; when alike from the yellow robed Buddhists or the scarlet robed Catholic, from the Greek ecclesiastic in his black gown, the Hindu in his red, or the Shinto in his white vestments, came the same sentiments of righteousness, aspiration and good-will; and in their advocacies of their own faith, earnest as they were, scarcely a word fell that could give offense to those of rival faith—it seemed, indeed, a new day of Pentecost, a descent of the holy dove of the Spirit, beneath a rainbow of blended spiritual rays, as comforting as that which foretold to Noah and his sons the end of storm and wrath upon the renovated earth. Every one who read the inspiring accounts of these meetings, where the representatives of these

varied faiths exchanged such pleasant words of amity and mutual respect, must have been impelled to ask: why may not this Pentecostal fellowship be maintained? Why may not Jew and Gentile, Roman and Protestant, Christian and Parsee and Brahman, be united, not merely for a few days, in some public meeting, but constantly, in daily life, in the unity of the Spirit and the bonds of peace; and thus

> "The whole round earth be bound
> With golden chains about the throne of love"?

There is certainly in the religious world a great yearning, both conscious and unconscious towards this end. There is a great Providential movement of the waters, recalling the churches of the world from their divisions to a new fellowship. The reasons for breaking through the old sectarian fences and for bringing together in brotherly hand-claspings those who are working for common ends, are patent to every one who will open his eyes. What needless divisions and superfluous multiplicity of sects are there. Our last United States census enumerates 143 different religious denominations, each with its own special organization, ritual and special belief. There are half a dozen diverse varieties of Lutherans; twelve of Presbyterians; twelve of Mennonites; thirteen of Baptists; and seventeen varied ecclesiastical stripes of Methodists. The differences between these are of a minor order;—the race or European nation from which they came, or the color of the skin of the members, or some minute difference as to the use of baptismal water or musical instruments, or prevenient or par-

ticular grace. They are as near one another as brothers and sisters of one family; and yet the smaller the theologic or ritual differences between them, the stronger oftentimes are their antipathies and aversions. Through this sectarian rivalry, little villages of 1,200 or 1,500 people, only able to sustain one pastor, have three, four or five meeting-houses of different faiths, closed half the time. The ministers receive but a quarter of the salary they should; charities languish; social life is embittered; and on all sides the Christian life of our smaller communities exhibits a deplorable inefficiency, waste, ill-will, and useless friction. John Adams once said: "This would be a pretty good world if there were no religion in it." Doubtless, it was these evils into which a narrow and petty sectarianism so often runs, which had called forth this impatient outburst. But this sectarian rivalry and bigotry is really as alien to the spirit of true religion as it is to that of human brotherhood. The growth and multiplication of sects was, in its origin, a movement in the direction of greater liberty and stricter loyalty to Christ and God.

But to-day, it is becoming the greatest hindrance and prejudice to the life of the soul and the health of Christendom. Where men become filled with a living sense of their kinship to the Eternal Spirit and to each other, they come with joy to see that this kinship is not confined to their one little church enclosure. They realize the deeper agreements which underlie their surface differences. They have common aims and are bound together by common interests. They serve, in their different ways,

one and the same Maker and righteous Lawgiver. They would all lift humanity out of the ooze of vice and evil, and enthrone the spirit above the flesh. In the materialism and animalism of the world they have a common foe; and in faith in the soul within and the hopes of its larger and fuller life beyond the portals of death they have their common encouragement and support.

Every church, therefore, that has fought earnestly in this common battle has made, and is making, some valuable contribution to the spiritual victory sought. There is good in all the churches; some special, varied need of the human heart which each one meets. The candid scholar is obliged to recognize how much humanity owes to each of the great branches of the Christian vine; to the Roman for its comprehensiveness, its steadfastness, its wonderful government of the masses; to Methodism for its zeal and cordial warmth; to the Episcopal for its dignity and enlistment in Christian service of the æsthetic sensibilities; to the liberal Christian for his light and culture; to the Calvinist for his consistent logic and stern inflexibility; to the Congregationalist for his defense of spiritual independency; to our latest born denomination, the Salvation Army, for its ardent devotion to the rescue and salvation of those whom the respectable churches usually ignore. And outside the Christian pale, the great Oriental faiths have also each some spiritual lesson or precious ethical impulse to contribute that makes each a helpful and holy acolyte in the great cathedral of the world's worship. Buddhism has its spirit of self-renunciation and universal

compassion, that would spare the life and pain even of the humblest insect. Mohammedanism has its sublime submission to the divine and its scrupulous sobriety; Confucianism its filial fidelity; Parseeism its punctilious purity, truthfulness and rectitude.

And not only has each some special excellence, but in their basal chords there is a noteworthy harmony. Let me quote on this point the significant declaration of an eminent Roman Catholic dignitary, made at Chicago. I refer to the words of Archbishop Ireland, on one of the opening days of the Parliament of Religions: "There is a great common ground in all religions, consisting of the vital and primordial truths about the infinite spiritual reality." All Christian sects are united in these common Christian truths, which as one sacred choir they chant in unison. And even when we pass outside the Christian pale, we find these fundamental truths—God, duty, immortality, the authority of truth, the sacredness of love—reechoed by Jew and Gentile, Parsee, Arab, Brahman and Chinese in concordant strains, which as they ascend to the Divine ear, doubtless blend in a single symphony of praise and prayer.

The more carefully we study the varied religions of the globe the more sure are we that none is wholly false. Each has its valuable and needed truth. But none, on the other hand, has the whole circle of pure truth. Each but gives us a segment of it. The keener our discernment of truth becomes, the clearer we see how fragmentary is that single member, finger, foot or eye, that any one denomination possesses. The partial truth which each sect illustrates makes us

long for that fuller beauty and perfection which can only be secured by bringing every limb and member, obscure and uncomely as it may be, into the one complete body that makes the God-designed whole.

Church unity is undoubtedly therefore a desirable thing. And I believe it is possible. It is more than that. As noble Dr. Barrows, of the Presbyterian Church, the originator and organizer of the Parliament of Religions, has said: "It is a necessity. It is being forced upon us by the scandal and weakness of schism. It is our business to make the conditions of life more tolerable here below; to bridge over the chasms which separate the rich and the poor, to push back the evil forces of crime, intemperance and vice, that have thriven through our disunion."

The practical question next presents itself: How may this be accomplished? How may we reunite the dissevered branches of Christendom? How may we bring into being that universal church, where every child of God, groping for the truth or longing for human sympathy, may find a spiritual home?

For a long time now, this has been an object of earnest thought, both by thoughtful individuals and by many great denominations; and no small number of solutions have been proposed. The English Church in the celebrated Lambeth proposals, offered as olive branches of peace the Nicene creed; the authority of the scriptures; the historic episcopate, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. The Roman Church has a much simpler proposition; all it asks is submission to the Pope. Protestant orthodoxy has suggested the Trinity, atonement and other doctrines,

agreed upon by the Evangelical Alliance. The Ethical Culture societies believe a purely ethical basis would unite all in a single organization, in freedom, fellowship and character.

These various movements and proposals have each failed practically to heal the divisions, or gain any acceptance approaching universality. The universal Church must have a broader basis than uniformity of sacraments or ritual. These are material and outward. The essence of religion is spiritual and inward. It lies in that communion which needs neither plate nor cup; in that sacrament of the self-surrendered heart which unites the soul with its God, as firmly without either wine or water as with them. The universal Church, again, cannot be circumscribed by limits of race or nationality. Color is only skin deep. In the sight of God, as Rabbi Hirsch says: "It is the black heart, not the black skin, which excludes; it is the crooked act, not the curved nose, that ostracizes. . . . The day of exclusive national religions is past, the God of the universe should speak to all mankind."

Neither can religious unity be based upon an identical creed. These minute and detailed confessions of faith and catalogues of dogma are thorn-hedges, set up for the wounding and cramping of every large mind and progressive thought. A man may repeat all the creeds without skipping a syllable, and say "I believe" after every Article, and yet have never taken the first step in the Christian life; and another may have followed in the very footsteps of Jesus, surrendering his very heart's blood in his complete devotion

to God and man; and yet, through some intellectual scrupulosity, not be able to find one of all the churches' creeds that he can assent to. Our belief is not a matter we can change at will; and it becomes increasingly evident that uniformity of dogma should not be demanded as the *sine qua non* of religious fellowship. As a broad-minded Methodist (Rev. Frank M. Bristol) has recently said: "Christianity is becoming more and more a life and a hope, and less and less a dogma and a theory. To me the test is as to a man's sincerity. When I know a man is sincere, that is enough. I want his hand and his fellowship in the common work of bettering the world."

Nor, once more, have I any confidence in seeing religious unity secured by ecclesiastical organization; by the swallowing up of weak sects by stronger rivals; by the voluntary surrender of modern churches to that which can show the greatest flavor of antiquity; by the supersedure of the many old denominations by churchly fusions; by some brand new organization of a more flexible and comprehensive nature; or by some nebulous pet phrase, that soon becomes as rigid a shibboleth as any of old. The older a denomination is, the more fossilized and unfit for present uses it is apt to be. And the new movement that, by its delightfully vague and elastic character, promises to engulf and erase all the old churches, usually ends by adding but another name to the long catalogue of petty and obscure sects. As has been aptly said, "A novel does not escape from being a novel by dubbing itself 'The no-name series.'" Great church administrations, like great political bodies, are un-

wieldy and undesirable. To fuse into one ecclesiastical body, denominations with diverse tendencies, such as the Catholics and the Quakers, the Greek Christians and the Congregationalists, would be a useless experiment. Unite them to-day, to-morrow they would fall apart. Even could one church absorb all the rest, it would not be desirable. In the one spiritual body as in the material, a variety of members, administrations and gifts is needed. Each should be developed after its own special aptitude, so that thus the varying needs of our many-sided human nature might be met.

What then is needed? It is that in all should be shown one and the selfsame Divine Spirit, working all in harmony. In the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace, let each fulfil its God-appointed mission. If any one branch of Christendom is ever to absorb all others; if Christendom is ever to absorb Brahmanism, or Brahmanism to absorb Christianity,—that is something we are not yet prepared for.

If it could be brought about to-day, it would not enrich and advance the fulness of religion, but would impoverish it. Protestantism has still too much to learn from Catholicism and Catholicism has too much to learn from Protestantism, and Christendom too much to learn from the Oriental faiths, and they too much to learn from us, to make it desirable yet awhile. As the broad-minded Hindu, Kananda, said at the Parliament of Religions: the motto on the banner of the religions of the future will be: "Help, and not fight; assimilation, not destruction; harmony, not dissension." Or to quote Christian authority, as the catholic-minded apostle to the Gentiles wrote in the first century: "If the whole

body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" So we may ask: if all Christians were conservatives, where were progress and new growth? If all were pioneers, where were the rear-guard and the base of supplies?

In the midst of our nation's bitterest and bloodiest sectional strife, Abraham Lincoln, in his Presidential message, uttered these memorable words: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, let us strive to bind up the nation's wound, to do all which may achieve a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

It is in this spirit that the various branches of Christendom, the diverse members of the household of God, Catholic or Protestant, Christian or pagan, should work and seek each other's hands.

What, then, are the elements and demands of such a unity of spirit? In the first place, all sects and churches should give to each other mutual respect—not mere toleration. That word tolerance is itself intolerant; a sign of patronizing conceit and narrowness. We should give more; we should give esteem, reverence and fraternal consideration to every other servant and worshiper of our common Father and Lawgiver. When we know that a brother has earnestly and honestly searched for the truth, let that be a sufficient ground for our regard. Let the churches recognize the value and validity of each other's ministrations. By the same comity, by which a marriage in one state, in accordance with its laws, is recognized also as a marriage in neighbor states,—so should the baptism

or admission to Christian membership or ordination to the ministry given by one branch of the Christian Church, be recognized as good and spiritually efficient by all other branches.

2. Let the attention of the churches be directed to their higher ends, not their lower mechanical and administrative details. Let them fix their eyes and efforts on the great things in which they agree, not on the little things in which they differ. As Dean Stanley has so well shown, there is a common Christianity, in which all branches of Christendom are one; —that love of God and man, that sacredness of duty and hope of heaven which is what makes the gospel dear to the human heart. The points over which the denominations divide,—episcopacy, immaculate conception of the Virgin, infallibility of the Pope, baptism by immersion or sprinkling, inerrancy of scripture, predestination of the elect—are points about which Christ cared too little ever to drop a word. One of the familiar stories is of a lady who, when asked if she was a Christian, said she was not sure that she was a Christian, but she was certain she was a Baptist. How many are there similarly who care little for religion, but are ardent Presbyterians, pronounced Methodists, bigoted Unitarians. If we are to gain any religious unity, we must reverse this. Christians must remember that higher and more binding than the allegiance due to presbyter, conference, synod or Pope, is their allegiance to Christ and to God. Above all denominational leaders—Luther, Calvin, Wesley or Channing—they should put their Lord and Master, Jesus; and above all religions, Christian and Pagan,

they should enthrone the loyalty to truth and righteousness without which each loses its saving salt.

3. There are, alas, plenty of things that tend to separate and divide the forces of religion; but when you scrutinize these,—be they bigotry and prejudice, or envy, ambition, rivalry, the virus of party spirit,—they none of them properly belong within the Church. They are werewolves of irreligion that, in the guise of defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints, have cunningly crept in where they have no right to be, and in the name of the Lord are busy pulling down the work that Christ's heart was set upon. All the great and eternal forces of the religious realm, on the contrary, are things that should unite, not divide humanity. As we promote any of these,—knowledge, righteousness, brotherly love,—we are bringing in to its rightful recognition the religious unity of the world.

See, for example, how the spread of knowledge, both spiritual and scientific, tends to unity. How many of the old barriers and arbitrary interpretations and blighting worship of the letter has modern Biblical criticism swept out of the way; and how many dark cobwebs of antiquated theology, that filled pious hearts with black despair, has science cleared off from the windows of faith! When Christian missionaries go to the heathen with theologies almost as baseless and superstitious as the heathen's own, they knock in vain for entrance. The shrewd pagans say, as a clever Japanese did to an orthodox missionary: "We have enough devils and hells of our own to believe in already, without adding any foreign ones." But if our

missionaries, instead, would carry with them the light of modern knowledge and diffuse our demonstrable science of the universe and its laws, this would, in a generation, melt away this vast ice-sheet of superstitions and false theories which form the foundation of their native idolatries and polytheisms. If we ever hope to supersede Paganism by Christianity or establish any religious fraternity and affiliation of the two, this is the path by which we must secure it. To evolve and ripen the truly Catholic or Universal Church, we must get illumination and sunshine from all quarters. They who think that from their single, personal or denominational standpoint they can see the whole circumference and fix the exact position and outline of absolute truth, show that they have still much to learn. There is a lesson on this point that the scientific world might give the Church. When a great phenomenon, such as the transit of Venus, takes place, no single astronomer nor any one astronomical observatory is conceited enough to think it can do the whole work satisfactorily, single-handed. They club their resources. They portion out the continent, and each group of astronomers proceeds to a different point of observation, before agreed upon, in friendly coöperation. Then, after the observation is taken, the personal equation—that is, the allowance for error, in noting the time, due to the individual peculiarities of each observer—is carefully allowed for. Then, the various observations are compared and one rectified by the others, and correction also made for the latitude and longitude and state of the atmosphere at each respective point of observation,

and finally the whole added and averaged. It is only by such cooperation and mutual rectification of one another's tendencies to error that astronomers secure results that they put any confidence in. And so, before the religious world can demand confidence in its spiritual perceptions, it must take equal care to eliminate from them the twists and refractions of personal idiosyncrasies and sectarian prejudices. It must be hospitable minded and ready to accept new truth and fuller light from whatever quarter it may be gained. "The spirit (the *Christian Union* has well said) that insists that every man shall see what every other man teaches,—no more, no less, no different,—is the spirit of schism. It is unchristian, and anti-Christian, because it is the spirit of conceit. It belittles truth; it divides and subdivides the Christian Church. It never has promoted Christian union, and it never can."

The method that leads there is the opposite one, that encourages every soul to exercise that right of private judgment which Luther vindicated, and is glad to see Mount Zion pictured from just as many diverse angles as possible, knowing that thus alone can a complete representation of the infinite truth be obtained.

And in the next place, as a fourth step in this staircase, we should place the stone of righteousness, —the practical service of our God and our fellow-men. While a man's chief thought is for his own soul's salvation, he clutches at any solitary plank that may float him on the wave; but when he gets to that higher view of religion that identifies the holy life with the helpful life, at once he reaches out a brotherly

hand to his neighbor. Jesus said that the second commandment is like unto, or born of, the first; and surely no one can be trusted to love the God he has not seen, if he love not the brother he has seen. Where there is that enthusiasm for humanity which befits the follower of Him who wished to be called the Son of Man, there the interest in dogmatic hair-splitting drops to the proper subordination. When we realize what the fight with evil means to-day; what Christians have got to do when they undertake vigorously to grapple with the saloon question, the Sunday question, the problem of poverty and abuse of childhood; when we get in earnest in the work of elevating our race, of suppressing vice, of inspiring men with a genuine love of purity and with living faith in their kinship to the Eternal Spirit and to each other, —then we see that we have no time for denominational quarrels; we see that these common needs of suffering humanity call for the united energies of all the Lord's soldiers if we ever expect to establish the kingdom of God on earth; and instead of the present emulation to make converts from one another or get a longer list of church members, the only rivalry will be a rivalry in bettering the world and an emulation of each other's virtues.

For many generations the mediæval alchemists sought for a universal solvent. In the physical realm, the search is a vain one. But in the spiritual realm, we need not go far for it. Love is that universal solvent which unloosens all bonds; a tincture that carries with it healing for every wound. With this password, one should be able to pass through every

interdenominational camp and army and find himself everywhere a citizen of the Divine kingdom. Without love, belief, be it never so close to the creed, is but sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And so religious unity, however huge be the single organization formed, however tight be the bonds of its universal Church, would be (when love is absent) but an ecclesiastical tyranny; an iron band, fatal to every growing shoot of the living vine. But where there is a positive Christian love, a spirit of sympathy and helpfulness to every neighbor,—what can bar out such a spirit from the holy communion? Suppose that your religious brethren give you only their indifference or hate. You can still give them the guerdon of your charity, the fragrant olive branch of your unstinted good will. There is an excellent New England story of an old Puritan, who, when he was excommunicated by the Church, declined to be cut off from their communion. For twenty years the good old man came, whenever the Lord's Supper was observed, bringing with him his own bit of bread and draught of wine, and in his own pew communed with the Church in spite of the Deacon's boycott. When a man carries the Christ-spirit with him, the fellowship of all the saints becomes his. Love is a communion-cup, which it needs no priest to fill, and which always gives the good man membership in the Church invisible, whatever the Church visible may say.

Such, then, are the needed seeds of religious unity: —regard for essentials—not inessentials; mutual respect; devotion to knowledge and righteousness; and above all, a broad charity and friendly sympathy.

Without these, no ecclesiastical fusions, no hierarchical organization, however extensive or compact, can give a religious unity that is worth anything. The promotion of this broad Christian spirit is the first and chief step. But where these spiritual roots are planted and made to grow, there they will naturally bloom and bear fruit in some sort of practical fraternity; and the encouragement of such outward fellowship again will foster and quicken the inward fellowship. It ought to lead at once to a large measure of cooperation. The smaller and kindred sects, whose differences are slight, ought to be willing to consolidate. The seventeen kinds of Methodists and the thirteen kinds of Baptists and the twelve kinds of Presbyterians, holding beliefs and usages substantially the same, might unite, one would think, without any serious sacrifice, and with a great saving of needless rivalry and waste. The same is true among the liberal churches. The difference between Unitarians and Universalists is one altogether too slight to justify their continued separation and rivalship. Where the kindred sects can thus honorably consolidate, let them do so. They ought to do so. And where this is not possible, let them try such looser methods of alliance as may bring them into harmony, without sacrificing what they consider essential principles. Following the political example of the union of our several states in the one United States, they might (without abandoning their independent liberties and local or special administrations) unite in federal unions, of most valuable kinds. Such movements as the Evangelic Alliance, the Pan-Presbyterian Assemblies, the

Church Congresses of later years are all commendable efforts in this direction. Without gaining legislative authority, such Congresses carry weightier moral authority and cultivate the unity of spirit and practical cooperation which is so valuable to-day. Still more excellent, because more filled with the spirit of a genuine catholicity, is the Laymen's League of our Western frontier, and the Brotherhood of Christian Unity, started recently in New York by Professor Seward, and our Father's Church, instituted by the Rev. Page Hopps, of London. In these latter, all dogmatic tenets are dropped; love to God and man under the leadership of Jesus is the only creed, and orthodox and heterodox alike are invited to membership. No one is asked to give up his special denominational connection, but for the sake of practical Christian effort, they associate themselves on a perfectly simple basis without regard to evangelical creeds. What may be the future of these new and broader fellowships that would stretch their lines across all denominations, remains to be seen. But as far as they can bring Christians into helpful cooperation for the betterment of human life, they must do good. Henceforth I hope to see all branches of Christendom periodically meeting in some general assembly, for mutual fraternity, counsel and inspiration; and the grand Parliament of Religions may, I trust, prove to be but the first of a series of similar conferences, a federation of the religious world, both Christian and Pagan, to advance the great interests they have in common. But without waiting for any such imposing assemblages or new organizations, there is a work for each

Christian close at hand, quite as important. In all our cities and towns there is a need and opportunity, without more ado, for friendly co-working among all sects. There are moral reforms, social problems, calls of human misery, educational and philanthropic enterprises that demand the collected efforts of all Christian hearts, without distinction of sect or faith. In our smaller villages, certainly, steps ought to be taken either for the direct union of the many poverty-stricken chapels that struggle with each other for existence; or else for their dissolution and reconstruction on some honorable basis which will provide for freedom and fellowship in worship.

Whatever dogmatism or sectarian ambition divides and impoverishes the forces that are battling to maintain righteousness and uplift humanity is a form of anti-Christ. Whatever can bring these forces into closer union and a firmer front; whatever can make the people learn to think of the church as one body in many members,—be it pulpit exchanges between the clergy of different denominations; city Ministerial Associations, or State Conferences of religion, embracing all denominations; union meetings for prayer or thanksgiving; common communion-services, open to members of all denominations of Christians, without invidious distinctions,—any signal of a broader good-will between the churches, erasing sectarian divisions, however trivial it may be, is helping forward the prayer of the Master that "they all may be one."

Of one blood, says Paul, are we all made. With God, the common Father, there is no respect of persons. One and the same heaven is the haven of peace

and love we all seek. Back of every varied soul and symbol stands the one Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration the holy men that founded each diverse church spake as they were moved in their respective age and land. No path of prayer but has lifted men nearer God; no creed has man framed but was as the broken lispings of an infant, beside the unutterable perfection of the Divine.